

the Eve of Lord Mahavira's 2500th Nirvana Anniversary

KING BIMBISĀRA

AND

KING AJĀTASĀTRU

IN THE AGE OF

MAHĀVĪRA & BUDDHA

By

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FOREWORD

Comparative study of the Jaina and the Buddhist literature is one of the most important branch of studies pertaining to ancient Indian culture and history. Many a problem regarding the dark period of ancient Indian history could be solved through a thorough and critical study of these two important movements of Indian religion. Upto now many scholars have studied the Buddhist literature critically and drawn conclusions there from. Also there are some other scholars who have dived deep into Jaina literature and discovered some facts throwing light on ancient Indian culture. But there is a dearth of such scholars who have studied both the Jaina and Buddhist literature deeply and critically from a comparative standpoint. Muni Shri Nagraj Ji the author of the present monograph is undoubtedly one of those Indian scholars to fathom the depth of this branch of knowledge. Besides him self being a Jaina monk he is well-conversant with the Jaina and the Buddhist literature as he has studied them from original Prakrit and Pali texts. His monumental treatise¹ for which he earned his doctorate (honoris causa) of letters is itself a direct evidence of his great erudition and deep studies.

¹ Agama aur Tripitaka Eka Anusarana Volume I History and Tradition. Published by Jaina Swetamber Terapanthi Mahasabha Calcutta 1969.

The present work is a part of his wide researches. It pertains to the two great kings of Magadha in the time of Mahavira and Buddha—Bimbisara and Ajatashatru. Not much is known about the role of these ancient kings of India in the field of history. The author has waded through the vast lore of Prakrit and Pali literature and critically studied the facts available there. His treatment of the subject is completely free from bias and prejudices. The conclusions he has drawn about the creed of these kings seem to be quite consistent with historical evidence and logical as well.

I congratulate the author for his commendable efforts in putting before the scholars of history and culture his valuable research findings in the form of a systematic and impressive monograph. I also hope that his future researches in this field will furnish us with so far unknown facts of historical and cultural value.

The November 1974

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PREFACE

Both Lord Mahavira (599 B C - 527 B C) and Lord Buddha (582 B C - 502 B C) were contemporary with the famous kings of Magadha (Bihār) Śrenika Bimbisāra and his successor Kūnika Ajātaśatru. Hence it is quite natural to find numerous allusions to both the kings in the Jaina and Buddhist scriptures popularly known as *Agamas* and *Tripiṭakas*. The *Agamas* are mostly written in the Ardha Magadhi or Prakrit language and the *Tripiṭakas* are in Pālī language.

But it is really quite surprising to find equal claims made by the Jaina and Buddhist as regards the faith of these kings. The Prakrit literature unambiguously describes Śrenika Bimbisāra and Kūnika Ajātaśatru as the followers of Lord Mahāvira while the Pālī literature makes an equally perspicuous claim as to their being followers of Lord Buddha. The present work is intended to discuss the question thoroughly and reach a definite conclusion. Although the book is not voluminous it is probably the first (and may be the last) work on this topic and has its own importance. However, the present work is not confined only to this issue it also intends to elucidate some aspects of Ancient Indian History. The era of kings Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru or Lord Mahāvira and Lord Buddha is one of the brightest periods of Indian History. The literature on Indian H

published has however not thrown adequate light on many of the prominent features such as the fall of the Vajji Republic. Only the evidence furnished by the Prakrit and Pali literature can enlighten this dark period of history. In the present work an humble effort of supplying this evidence has been made so as to present elaborately the political as well as cultural conditions of that age.

In spite of it being a research work this book will in no way be less interesting than a novel. I hope

The present book is one of the chapters of my voluminous treatise titled *Agama Aura Tripitaka Eka Anusilina* which was written in such a way that each of its chapter can serve as a separate book. Another chapter of this treatise titled the Contemporaneity and the Chronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha has already been published by Today and Tomorrow Book Agency, New Delhi and has earned great admiration from people of our country as well as abroad. I hope publication of this book also will be equally appreciated.

Translation of such critical works in itself is not an easy task but Muni Mahendra Kumar has accomplished this quite adroitly for which I express my hearty congratulations to him.

MUNI NAGRAJ

30th August 1974

Sethia Sadan

Sadulpur (Rajasthan)

CONTENTS

Chapter I Śrenika Bimbisāra

The First Contacts	1
In the Tripitakas	9
Commencement of Uposatha in the Buddhist Order	10
Soldiers forbidden to be Initiated	10
Miracle in the Prison	11
Conversion of King Pukkusati	12
Next life of Bimbisāra	13
Contact with Mahāvira	14
Initiation of Princes into the Monastic Order	17
Prophecy	18
Royal Monk Prasannachandra	20
Follower of Mahāvira or Buddha	23
Controversy about the Names	30
Bhimbhāsara etc	30
Bimbisāra	32
Śrenika	32
Father's name	34
Queens	34
Princes	36
Chapter II Ajātsatru Kunika	
Buddhist account	38
Jain description	39
Message of Mahāvira's Arrival	40
Arrival of Mahāvira at Champa	41
Sermons of Mahāvira	43
Follower of Jainism or Buddhism ?	44
Mother's Longings during Pregnancy	50

Srenikas Affection for his Son	51
Father's Imprisonment	51
Patricide	52
Repentance	53
Comments	54
His Mother	55
Difference in Nomenclatures	58
Mahasilākantaka Batt'e and Victory over the	59
Vajjis	60
The Jain version	64
Destruction of the Rampart of Vairāṭi	66
The Buddhist Version	68
Dissension among the Vajjis	70
Comments	72
Death of Kuṣika	

CHAPTER I

ŚRENĪKA BIMBISĀRA

The king of Magadha in the age of Mahāvīra and Buddha was Śrenīka Bimbisāra who was the sixth king in the line of Śiśunaga Dynasty¹ Rājagṛha was his capital city where he ruled from 582 B C to 544 B C² As regards his creed we have it on the authority of Buddhist sources that he was a follower of the Buddha but the Jains have claimed him as a convert to the Nirgrantha Order It is essential therefore to make an effort to present the relevant evidence on the controversy and come to a definite conclusion

The First Contacts

The Buddhists hold that Bimbisāra's first visit to Buddha took place immediately after his renunciation and much before his enlightenment According to the Pali literature Buddha after having renounced the world went to Rājagṛha When Buddha the young ascetic entered the city of Rājagṛha for begging alms thousands of men and women were attracted by his magnetic personality Great poet Aśvaghoṣa depicting the episode writes

As soon as one saw Buddha one's eyes got rivetted to his eye brows forehead face eyes

1 See for details the author's *Contemporaneity and Chronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha Today and Tomorrow's Book Agency New Delhi 1970* pp 97-98

2 See *ibid* p 106

torso hands feet etc whichever part of the body they perceived ¹

In Rājagṛha while seeking aims Buddha walked with the steady eyes minutely observing a distance equivalent to the length of a yoke. He was silent. His gait was slow and regular and his mind was composed ²

King Bimbisara also saw this ascetic spreading divine glory from his palace. He was instantly attracted towards him and keenly desired to talk with him. He confronted Buddha on Mount Pandu (Ratnagiri) near Rājagṛha.

Bimbisara offered Buddha his kingdom and invited him to enjoy the luxuries of the palace. Buddha declined to accept anything and preached the disastrous results of indulgence in carnal pleasures. Buddha said I have accepted asceticism not for the sake of royal pleasures but to achieve enlightenment. Bimbisara replied 'I wish you speedy success. I invite you to visit Rājagṛha after achieving enlightenment. Buddha promised the king to do so and went away ³

1 *Bhūvanā lalāṣaṃ mukhamukṣhaṇe va rapah karau va charanau gaṇi va*

Yadeva yastasya daḍarsa tatra tadeva tasyaṭha babandha chakṣhi h

—Ashvaghosha *Buddha Charita* canto X verse 8

2. *Alaṣachakṣ r jagamaḥ adarsī nīrttavag yamtritamand gaṇi*
Cīa hara bhikṣi m satu bhikṣhina ya nīdharā gaṇraṇi
chalam cha chetah —*Ibid* canto X verse 13

3 *Suttanipatta Mahavagga Pavallja Sutta Buddha Cha ita*
 canto XI v 7.

According to the Jain version Śrenika's first contact with the Jain religion was through Anāthī Muni. This meeting was very similar to the meeting described above. There was a very beautiful garden known as Mandikukṣa full of various types of flowers near Rājagṛha. Once Śrenika, the ruler of Magadha, made a pleasure excursion to this garden. There he saw a saint (*nirgrantha*) sitting under the shade of a tree. He looked delicate and accustomed to comfort. When the king saw his figure his astonishment at that ascetic's figure was very great and unequalled. He exclaimed: O his colour! O his figure! O the loveliness of the noble man! O his tranquility! O his detachment, O his disregard for pleasures.¹

Sitting in front of him the king respectfully asked: Though a young nobleman you have entered the order in an age fit for pleasure, you exert yourself as a Śramaṇa, will you explain?

The ascetic I was without a protector.

The king How is it that there was nobody to protect one so accomplished as you? I shall be the protector of you. O monk, enjoy pleasures together with your family and friends for it is a rare chance to be born as a human being.

The monk You yourself are without a protector. O ruler of Magadha, how can you protect anybody else?

The king How do you call me unprotected? What is your definition of unprotected? O ascetic?

¹ *Aḥi saṃśa aḥi samam aḥi ajassa somana
Aḥi khaṇṭi aḥi mati aḥi bhoge avamāna
—Uttara II) avamā Sūtra chapter XX v 2 English trans-
lation by Jacob; Sacred Books of the East vol. XI.V p*

The monk. There is a town called Kāṣṭhambī where lived my father whose name was Prabhuta dhanasanchaya (meaning very wealthy) who was true to his name. We were a happy family. Once in my early youth I was caught with a very severe pain in my eyes and a severe burning fever all over my body. The pain was dreadful and unbearable. The best of physicians came to my help but they could not rid me of my pains. My father would have spent all he possessed for my sake but he could not rid me of my pains hence I say that I am without protection. My loving and faithful wife moistened my breast with her tears, not living my side even for a moment but she could not rid me of my pains hence I say that I am without protection.

And the Mahānirgrantha—the great ascetic further explained to the king. O king thus finding myself entirely without protection I sought refuge in religion. I took an oath that if I for once shall get rid of these pains I shall become a houseless monk. The next morning my pains had vanished and hence I took leave of my relations and became a houseless monk.

The above dialogue is found with more details in the twentieth chapter called *Mahanirgrantha* of the *Uttaradhyāyana Sūtra*. It may be interesting to note that Monk Anathī also explained to the king about another kind of want of protection. He referred to those monks who after being initiated did not adhere to the code of asceticism. Impeaching strongly the laxity of character of such persons the king said. But there is still another want of protection. O king bear therefore O king attentively.

with concentrated thoughts how soon easily discouraged in a go astray after having adopted the code of the Niganthas ¹

Such a person is of no value like an empty clenched fist or like an uncoined false Karṣapana (coin) just as a piece of glass resembles turquoise in shining but it is worthless for the man of discernment so is he who though putting on the garb of a monk does not properly follow the code and though unrestrained pretends to be a restrained (ascetic) doing so he will come to grief for a long time.

(Having adopted the code of Niganthas) He who practises divination from bodily marks and dreams, who indulges in augury and superstitious rites who gains a sinful living by practising such and other magic tricks will have no refuge at the time (of retribution) ²

He who accepts forbidden alms viz *Audjesikam* i.e. such food as has been prepared for giving alms to the Parivrajakas Śramanas Nirgranthas, etc *Kritikram* i.e. has been bought for his sake or *Nityajinam* as he gets regularly (as by right and

1 *Imaṃ hu annaṃ vi anaṃsaṃ n va tam gachutto nishuo tuncḥi*
Nivantiṃ dhammam laḥayanaṃ vi jaha sivaṃtī eḥ bahukavara
na a — Ibid v 38

2 *Polle va mutṭhi jaha se asare ayanṭie kudakahanane va*
Radhantini v uḷiyappagase amahaeghae hoī ya janaes i
huṣ lalinṃam tha dharantia isiyḥayam jinḃa bahantia
Asanḃae sanḃayalappamane vin gḥayamaḡachchhu se
churam pi — Ibid vv 42 43

3 *Jo lakkhanam suvina paṃmyamane ninnṭakouhalaṃ sampagadhe*
kuḥeda uḃasa aḥaḥavi na gachc'ḥai saramam tammi laḥe
— Ibid v 45

The monk There is a town called Kausambi where lived my father whose name was Prabhūta dhanasrochaya (meaning very wealthy) who was true to his name. We were a happy family. Once in my early youth I was caught with a very severe pain in my eyes and a severe burning fever all over my body. The pain was dreadful and unbearable. The best of physicians came to my help but they could not rid me of my pains. My father would have spent all he possessed for my sake but he could not rid me of my pains hence I say that I am without protection. My loving and faithful wife moistened my breast with her tears not living my side even for a moment but she could not rid me of my pains hence I say that I am without protection.

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custom) who like fire devours everything will go to hell from here after having sinned ¹

Thus condemning the so-called lax monks, in the end Anāthi Muni clearly admonishes the king of Magadha thus. A wise man who hears this discourse an instruction full of precious wisdom and who deserts every path of the wicked should walk on the road of the great Nirgranthis ²

King Śreṇika was extremely pleased by hearing Anāthi's sermon. With folded hands expressing his gratitude to Anāthi Muni the king said. You have varily explained to me what it is to be without protection. You have made the best use of human birth you have made a true gain. O great sage it is only you who (in true sense can be said to) have a protector and relations for you have entered the path of the best Jinās. You are the protector of all unprotected beings. O ascetic I ask you to forgive me. O highly fortunate (monk) ³ I seek to be disciplined by you. That by asking you I have disturbed your meditation and that I invited you to enjoy pleasures all this you must forgive me ⁴

- 1 *U lles am ko azadim n vaṇam na mumchal kimehi anesaniṇ
jam*
*Atti v va sa vabhaḥkḷi bhavitta so c'huo gachchhal latn
pa am — Ibid v 47*
- 2 *Sochela a mehani sublas vaṇ imam am sasanam nanagu
no areṇam*
*Maggan k silanaṇ h na sarvaṇ mahanyathana vae pāhen
am — Ibid 31*
- 3 *Taṭha va senio raya inamadaḥa kavamjati*
An hatam jaha bh vaṇ s itthu me v adanṣṭam
*T jjam suladḥ am khu manussajammam labha sulattha
ne mālasi*
- 4 *saṇaḥa ya sabavṇṇa a ya jam bhe thia magga
manam*

The concluding verse reads : When the lion of kings had thus with the greatest devotion praised the lion of houseless monks he (the king) together with his wives servants and relations became a staunch believer in the religion (of nirgranthas) with a pure mind ¹

There are striking similarities between the Jain account of King Srenika's meeting with Anāthi Muni and the Buddhist episode of Bimbisara's meeting with Buddha

In both the episodes the king of Magadha (a) is very much impressed by the elegance and equanimity of the young ascetic (b) offers him the facilities of carnal pleasures and (c) obtains refusal thereof. The sequence of both the scenes forces one to doubt whether one of the traditions had copied the other. 'Magdikuchchhi' garden has been referred to as 'Maddakuchchi' in the Buddhist tradition ². Except the above episode we do not find a reference to Anāthi Muni anywhere else either in the Jain or the Buddhist literature. Whether he was a disciple of Mahavira or initiated in the order of Pārśva is also not alluded to anywhere

*Tam si naho anukhanam sarvathunana samjaya
Aham mi te mahabhaga ¹ Ichchhami an sasilam
Pucchunna me tathiam jhanaviggaham lo karo
N muraio va bhaghiya tam sarvati marisela me
— Ibid vv 54-57*

1. *Evam thanitana sa rajasio ana arasiam paramai
bhatte
Suo olo sarasiasa sabandhavo dhammanuratto
vimalena chejasa
— Ibid verse 55*

2. D " Mahaparinibbana
(N 3

Nor there is any mention of his ever meeting Mahavira. Probably these reasons have led Dr Radhakumud Mukherji the historian to conclude that the person referred to as Anathi in this episode was none other than Mahāvīra on the basis of epithet Anagara Sibho (lion of the monks). He therefore infers that this meeting of Śrenika was with Mahavira himself¹. While such an interpretation would no doubt increase the historical importance of the meeting we have no confirmatory evidence to support it. On the contrary mention of the Town Kausambi, Prabhuta Dhana Sanchaya Merchant (as Anathi's father), pain in the eye etc definitely point to an entirely different person.

The significant difference in the Jain and the Buddhist versions of the Bimbisāra's first contact is that while in the Buddhist text Śrenika (Bimbisāra) merely invites Buddha to visit Rajagṛha on his attaining enlightenment in the Jain scripture he with his family accepts Nirgrantha religion as a result of his contact with Anathi.

Nirgrantha Anathi's description of the other type of Unprotectedness appears to be hitting out at pseudo monks to divert the king's faith from them. It is difficult to conclude from this description whether any particular sect was the target of his criticisms nor is it clear whether Śrenika was the follower of that sect. Whereas his reference is chiefly to easy going Nirgranthas it is difficult to say which Nirgranthas had become so much lax. If it is to the easy going monks initiated

¹ *Civilization* p. 185 (Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan 1964)

in the tradition of Pārśva then it is obvious that the time of this episode must be after Mahāvīra's omniscience and before his visit to Rajagṛha because that was the period when the lax monks of the Pārśva-order held the sway

In the Tripiṭakas

We find several clear proofs of King Bimbisāra having accepted the Buddhist faith. The original reference is found in the *Vinay Piṭaka* where it is stated Buddha visited Rajagṛha after ~~from many~~ thousands of Jāṭilas¹ such as Uruvela Kāśyapa etc. King Bimbisāra came to know that he visited Buddha accompanied with ~~ten thousand~~ thousand Brahmins and householders of Māgadhā. Buddha was sojourning at Lumbinī at that time. He preached to them. ~~He delivered a~~ sermon of ten hundred thousand ~~of~~ Māgadhā including Bimbisāra ~~and~~ and there uncorrupted vision of truth ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ produced must cease to be. ~~What~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~and~~ ~~accepted~~ the Buddhist faith. ~~He~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~staunch~~ Buddhist. Bimbisāra ~~came~~ ~~to~~ ~~invite~~ Buddha for dinner. ~~He~~ ~~said~~ ~~that~~ ~~on~~ ~~that~~ ~~day~~ I have fulfilled all the ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~past~~ ~~four~~ ~~aspects~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~law~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ entertained since long I ~~devoted~~ ~~my~~ ~~life~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~service~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ crowned as a (coronated) ~~king~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ the Buddha visit my capital ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ presence (4) May I listen ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ May I accept him as ~~my~~ ~~friend~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ these five aspirations ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~fulfilled~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~

1 Jāṭilas were ascetics who were followers of Pārśva.

2 Vinay P. ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~now~~ ~~a~~ ~~day~~

I invite you and all your monks to be my guests for tomorrow. The next day Buddha and his monks accepted the hospitality of the king who served them with his own hands and dedicated Veluvana gardens for the use of Buddha and his monks.¹

This episode is corroborated by the *Kutadanta Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya*. There the Brahmin Kutadanta says to his advisers and colleague brahmins: Why should I not go to visit Śramaṇa Gautama? Even Śrenika Bimbisara the king of Magadha together with his wives sons and ministers has dedicated his life to the cause of Buddhism.² In the *Sonadanda Sutta* Brahmin Sonadanda gives utterance to the same words on a fitting occasion.³

Commencement of Uposatha in the Buddhist Order

Depiction of a number of episodes describing Bimbisara's relations with Buddha and the Buddhist order after accepting Buddhist faith are available. Mention is found in the *Mahavagga* of the *Vinaya Pitaka* about the personal visits of Bimbisara to Buddha on a few occasions. During one of such visits Bimbisara proposed: Oh Lord! disciples of other faiths congregate and hold religious discourses on the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of the lunar fortnight. Why should we not do the same? Buddha gave his assent to the proposal and thus commenced the custom of *uposatha* in the Buddhist order.

Soldiers Forbidden to be Initiated

On another such occasion he entreated Buddha not to initiate members of the armed forces in the

¹ *Ibid.* pp. 37-8

Digha Nikaya 1.5 pp. 111-12 (Nalanda edition)

ibid. 1-4 p. 108

monastic order This was necessary because many soldiers when dispatched for fighting in the front lines sought initiation as monks through fear of death Buddha gave his assent to this also ¹

Once Śrenika Bimbisara called the representatives of eighty thousand villages which were ruled by him He taught them political social and economical administration At last he said Whatever I have taught is all mundane For religious knowledge you should seek refuge in Buddha Thereafter they all went to Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain and became followers of Buddha

Śrenika Bimbisara appointed his royal physician Jivaka Kaumara Bhṛtya for the medical care of Buddha and his monastical order Description of his having built monasteries is also available ²

According to the *Petarattiṭṭhu Atthakatha* Śrenika Bimbisara observed *Uposatha* every month on the eighth fourteenth and fifteenth days of the fortnight

Miracle in the Prison

According to the *Amitayurdhāna Sutra* of the Mahāyāna School during the evening of his life when Śrenika Bimbisāra was in prison Maudgalyāyana = chief disciple of Buddha by his miraculous powers used to appear in the prison and preached him religious maxims In fact Bimbisāra desired so and accordingly it happened Vaidehī the wife

1 Vinaya Pitaka Mahāvagga Mahākhandhaka

2 Vinaya Pitaka Mahāvagga Chammakhandhaka p 199

3 Ibid Chullavagga Khuddakavāṇīśaka = 458

4 I erse

of Bimbisāra was also imprisoned in a separate cell. It is also mentioned that on her praying Buddha himself appeared there.¹

According to the *Dhammapada Atthakatha* when the Licchhavis sent Mahāli who was a member of Bimbisāra's retinue to ■ ■ Buddha to visit Vaiśālī Bimbisāra did not himself try to ■ ■ rsuade Buddha to do so but when Buddha agreed to go he repaired the whole road from Rājagṛha to the Gangā—a distance of five leagues—for Buddha to walk upon, he erected a rest house at the end of each league and spread flowers of five different colours knee deep along the whole way. Two parasols were provided for Buddha and one for each monk. The king himself accompanied Buddha in order to look after him offering him flowers and perfume and all the requisites throughout the journey which lasted five days. Arrived at the river he fastened two boats together, decked with flowers and jewels and followed Buddha's boat into the water upto the neck. When Buddha had gone the king set up an encampment on the river bank awaiting his return, he then escorted Buddha back to Rājagṛha with similar pomp and ceremony.

In the *Lalitavistara* it is mentioned that Buddha and his monastic order were exempted from ferry charges.

Conversion of King Pukkasati

It has been stated in the commentary of the *Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta* of the *Vajjhima Nikāya* Once

1 SBE vol XLIV ■ 166

Dhammapada Atthakatha vol III pp 438 ff *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* vol II p 288

some merchants of Takṣaśīla came to Bimbisara's court. They praised their king Pukkusati. They depicted him to be of the same age and as virtuous as Bimbisara. A friendly alliance was thus established between the two kings through exchange of messes. Merchants of both the countries were exempted from custom duties mutually. Pukkusati presented five costly multicoloured shawls to Bimbisara. In return Bimbisara presented a golden plaque inscribed with eulogies of Buddha. Eventually Pukkusati came to Rajagṛha travelling on foot to visit Buddha and became a Buddhist monk.

Next Life of Bimbisara

The description of life after death of Bimbisara is found in the *Jaṇavasabha Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* as under. Ānanda asked Buddha, "O Lord! Since you have described the life after death of several of your disciples of various nationality it would be fit if you will also describe the same of Śreṇīka Bimbisāra who was also a religious and pious king and also your disciple."

In response to Ānanda's request Buddha went into meditation and concentrated his consciousness to know in which state of life Bimbisara was experiencing happiness or misery.

A celestial *Yakṣa* revealed himself and said "O Lord! I am Janavasabha" and repeated it thrice and asserted "I am Bimbisāra myself." Then Buddha knew and declared to Ānanda that Bimbisāra had been born as a *Yakṣa* and was named Janavasabha.

The *Therīgāthā* mentions the initiation in the Buddhist order of Khema one of the queens of Bimbisara. She was ranked by Buddha foremost among the nuns of his order for her great insight.

IN THE ĀGAMAS

All the above quotations are so clear in themselves that if we were to decide merely on their evidence we would undoubtedly conclude that Śrenika Bimbisara was a follower of Buddha. However a thorough study of the Jain Āgamas furnishes evidence which is even clearer than this.

Contact with Mahavira


We have already mentioned how Śrenika the king of Magadha came into contact with Anathī Nirgrantha and learnt for the first time about the Nirgrantha religion. His direct contact with Mahavira and his deep reverence for and faith in him is vividly depicted in one of the chapters of the Āgama *Dasasrutaskandha*. It is stated: In those days there was a city named Rājagṛha. Outside the city were Guṇasīla gardens. King Śrenika ruled there. One day King Śrenika while holding court called some of his peronnels and told them: Go and thus address the proprietors (managers) of all rest houses gardens schools abodes temples halls places of distribution of food and water market places lime kilns bazars wood depots factories and workshops surrounding the city of Rājagṛha. It is the order of King Bhambhasara that whenever Lord Mahavira arrives in this city you should offer him your premises and facilities for lodging etc.

and inform me immediately about his arrival. The personnels carried out his orders.

One day Lord Mahavira arrived in Rājagṛha and people assembled. Proprietors of rest houses etc. came to Śreṇika and said 'O king! To see whom you are so very anxious and whose name gladdens your heart so much, he, the Preceptor Tirthankara, Omniscient (all perceiving and all knowing) Lord Mahavira has arrived in Rājagṛha and stays at Guṇasīla gardens.

Śreṇika was very happy and content to hear this news. Getting up from his throne, and walking a few paces in the direction of Guṇasīla gardens, he bowed to Lord Mahavira. After having rewarded the messengers, he called the heads of his army, transport departments etc. and ordered them to keep ready the fourfold retinue and the chariot used for religious purposes.

Having done this he came to Queen Chelana and said 'Dar! Visiting the Omniscient Preceptor is a great blessing. Let us therefore go and visit Lord Mahavira, bow to him, revere him, welcome him and pay our respects to him. Lord Mahavira is blessed, consecrated, god of gods and omniscient. Let us go and worship him. Worshipping him would be blessings for us for happiness and welfare in this life, the next and all the subsequent cycles of life and in achieving emancipation. Hearing this Chelana became glad and happy.

Chelana completed her ablution, put on clothes and ornaments and rode the chariot side of  In due course the

Gunasila gardens Facing Lord Mahāvira Chelana venerated him with folded hands inquired about his well being and bringing Śrenika in front of him busied herself in the worship of Mahāvira

Mahāvira preached Congregation dispersed Observing the divine affluence of Śrenika some of the monks wondered Blessed is Śrenika Bhambhasara to have Chelana as his queen and Magadha as his kingdom If ourusterites are fruitful then we should enjoy as their fruits such delightful pleasures Similarly observing the divine splendour of the queen some of the nuns too had the desire to have similar pleasures

Mahāvira by his power of knowledge knew about these desires of monks and nuns He at once ordered the monks to assemble and explained them the evil consequences of such desires The monks and nuns repented for having such desires

This reference is a source of information about deep reverence that Śrenika Bhambhasara had towards Mahāvira as well as it points to the fact that this should be the first meeting of Śrenika with Mahāvira Here it is Chelana who leads Śrenika to Mahāvira and after introducing him sits for the audience While Chelana was a follower of Nirgrantha tradition by birth Śrenika on the other hand was in the beginning a follower of another th It was by her efforts that Śrenika became a power of Jainism The fact that Chelana led and

introduced Śrenika to Mahāvira supports our deduction that it was Śrenika's first visit to the latter. That monks and nuns desired specific rewards for their austerities after observing Śrenika's and Chelana's grandeur also endorses this fact.

In the *Anuttaravajrasāgama* another episode is described thus: King Śrenika after having paid his veneration to Lord Mahāvira at the end of sermon asked: 'O Lord! Who amongst the fourteen thousand monks such as Indrabhūti is the foremost in observing austerities and thus purifying his self?' The Lord replied: 'Śrenika! The monk named Dhanya is the foremost observer of austerities and purifier of the self.' King Śrenika was very happy to hear this. He went to Monk Dhanya and complimented him: 'O beloved of gods! Blessed you are! Lucky you are!' Then he came back to Lord Mahāvira, paid his veneration to him and returned to his palace.¹

In the thirteenth chapter of *Layadharmakāśha* also a description of Śrenika's visit to Mahāvira with full retinue is given.

Initiation of Princes into the Monastic Order

On the occasion of the initiation of Prince Meghākumara Śrenika pronounced a eulogy on the Nirgrantha religion thus: 'Nirgrantha religion is true, paramount, perfect, leading to salvation, logical and unique. To become a monk in such a religion is extremely difficult.'² Śrenika's another

1. Ch. III para 4.

2. *Layadharmakāśha*, 13.

prince Nandisena was also ordained in the order of Mahavira ¹

We also find a reference that once Śrenika announced in a meeting of his royal family knights and ministers. If anyone wishes to get initiated by Lord Mahāvira I will not prevent him. Inspired by this announcement twenty three of his princes such as Jali Māyali etc got initiated by Mahāvira ². Also thirteen of his queens including Nandī Nandamati etc entered into Mahāvira's order of nuns ³

Prophecy

Once King Śrenika was sitting near Lord Mahāvira in the Samavasarana (the god made place for the sermons of the Tirthankara). At that time a man whose body was in advanced stage of leprosy came there bowed and sat down near the king. Just then Lord Mahāvira sneezed and the leper said 'Die'. When Śrenika sneezed the leper said 'Live'. Prince Abhayakumāra also sneezed. The leper said 'Live or die'. Butcher Kālasaurika sneezed and the leper said 'Do not live nor die'. The king hearing these absurd words of the leper asked his soldiers to seize him. But when the soldiers made an attempt to capture him he flew up in the air and became invisible.

Caught by surprise the king asked Lord Mahāvira about the wonderful episode. Mahāvira said 'The

¹ *Trisastisalakā purāṇacharita* am book X canto VI

² *Mahāvīracharitam* by Gunachandra p. 334

Anuttaravandadāsanga part I chrs 1-10 part II chrs 1-13

Antarāṅga by L. ...

He was not a human being. He was a *deva* (god) in disguise and whatever he uttered was not at all absurd. He asked me to die for I shall attain emancipation after death. He told you to live because after death you will be born in hell. He said to Abhayakumara Live or die because he is devoted to righteous life while he lives and will take birth as a god in the Anuttaravimana (the highest category of the gods) after the death. When he asked Butcher Kalasaurika not to live nor to die the significance was that the butcher was devoted to evil while living and would go to the seventh hell (the worst of all hells) after death.

King Śrenika after hearing from Mahāvira that he himself would have to go to hell in the next life was astounded. He bowed to Mahāvira and asked

How shall I the follower of you Lord Mahāvira! have an existence in hell? Is it the result of my devotion to thee?

Mahāvira said to the king No it is not so. In past on account of deep interest in hunting you had already acquired the sin (karma) responsible for birth in hell. The result of following my path will be that just after the end of your infernal life you will be born again as a human being and just as I am the last (twenty fourth) Tirthaṅkara (Lord) of the present lineage of twenty four Tirthaṅkaras you will become the first named Padmanābha Tirthaṅkara of the future lineage of twenty four Tirthaṅkaras. Hearing this great prophecy King Śrenika became extremely happy.

1 The detailed description of Padmanābha Tīr given in the *Thaṭṭa Sūtra* 9/3/693

Śrenika at once asked Mahāvira 'Is there any means by which I can escape hell?'

Mahāvira replied 'If you make Kapilā, the Brāhmanī, give alms cheerfully with devotion to śādhus if you make Butcher Kālasaurika give up slaughtering even for a day then you would be saved from rebirth in hell not otherwise O King !

King Śrenika at once persuaded Kapilā as well as Kālasaurika but both of them refused to do as Śrenika said. When Kapilā was forced to give alms she said 'I am not giving this : it is the king who is giving alms'. For preventing the butcher from killing the animals the king made to keep him in a dry well and kept him prisoner a day and night but the butcher made five hundred buffaloes out of clay and killed them¹. In fact both the means suggested by Mahāvira were impossible happenings and hence the hell was also unavoidable for Śrenika. Mahāvira had only suggested them to enlighten Śrenika.

Royal Monk Prasannachandra

The Jain literature is replete with accounts of the dialogues between Mahāvira and King Śrenika. One of these interesting allusion is in the context of royal monk Prasannachandra.

Prasannachandra was the king of Potanapura. When Mahāvira went to Potanapura King Prasannachandra enlightened by his sermons joined the monks order. Once Mahāvira accompanied by

his order of monks went to Rājagṛha. There monk Prasannachandra took to meditation standing just outside the *samavasāra* of Lord Mahāvira. At that time King Śrenika accompanied by his full retinue happened to pass the site while going to pay his visit to Mahāvira. One of his generals named Durmukha seeing the royal monk Prasannachandra was filled with malice towards him. He started gossiping with his colleagues "This monk is a sham as well as unenlightened. He has yoked his son who is still a minor to the burden of the kingdom and himself has pretended to renounce the world. His ministers have now conspired with the enemy king to deprive the boy king of his kingdom."

When Prasannachandra the royal king standing in meditation overheard these words his mind was overcome with anger and hate towards the ministers and the enemies. Standing even in meditation posture Prasannachandra reflected that if he were there he would have punished them. With such reflections Prasanna, untroubled from these doubts forgot his monkhood. Thinking himself a king, he began to fight in his mind.

Meanwhile King Śrenika after having paid his respects to Monk Prasannachandra reached Mahāvira's Samavasāra and after bowing Lord Mahāvira asked him "If the royal sage Prasannachandra would die just now while he is engaged in meditation where would he take his rebirth?"

Mahāvira replied "He will go to the seventh hell." King Śrenika was stunned by the answer. To verify that he had heard properly he asked the same question after a while. Mahāvira

If Prasannachandra dies just now he would attain the highest category of devas (gods) called Sarvārthasiddha. King Śrenika was yet more confounded by this double explanation. Resolving Śrenika's ambiguity Mahavīra said: You need not get bewildered. It is the mental attitude which counts. When you were asking the first question Prasannachandra's mind was engaged in the fight against his ministers etc. Due to high intensity of anger he would have certainly gone to the seventh hell if he would have died then. But at the time of your second question state of his mind had totally changed. He had recovered himself from the sinful thinking and again established himself in spiritual meditation by that time. No sooner had Mahavīra completed his sentence than the god's drums were heard proclaiming that the royal sage Prasannachandra had achieved omniscience. Śrenika rejoiced at glory of the Jain order.¹

According to the *Chaupannamahapurusa charīyam* Indra once praised Śrenika saying: There is none equal to Śrenika in religious devotion and faith. One of the gods got enraged at this and decided to test Śrenika. At the end of his test when he found that Śrenika was indeed a staunch devotee of the Nirgrantha religion he felt happy. Pleased with his devotion the god gave Śrenika a gift of a necklace of eighteen strands which attained the historical importance later being the bone of contention

1. *Tattvasaṁskāra puruṣaśāstram* book V canto IX vv 21-50 cf. English translation by Helen M. Johnson vol VI pp 230-32.

of the two wars viz Rathamusala and "Mahasila
kantaka" ¹

According to the Digambara tradition of the
Jains Mahavira delivered his first sermon on Mt
Vipulachala near Rājagṛha on the first day of the
dark fortnight of Śravana Śrenika king of Magadha
was present with his family and full retinue
in the congregation. He was the leader of the
male laity while Queen Chelana was the leader of
the female laity ²

Follower of Mahavira or Buddha

When we consider the above proofs provided by
the Jains undoubtedly Śrenika emerges as a staunch
follower of Mahavira. On the other hand if proofs
given by both the Jains and the Buddhists are con-
sidered simultaneously and impartially neither of
them outweighs the other. Although it is difficult
to adjudge any particular side to be stronger in
proving Śrenika as its follower it can undoubtedly
be said that a chronological examination of the
above proofs provided by both sides would prove
many of them to be of later origin that is appended
from time to time as legendary literature. As for
instance Rhys Davids³ says "And so I would
submit stands the case also with our present Sutta
(the Kūtadanta Sutta). The whole legend is obvio-
usly invented ad hoc. Its details are not meant to be
taken seriously as historical place. The Brahman
Kūtadanta (pointed tooth) is mentioned nowhere

1 Detailed description follows on pp 59-65

2 *Bharatiya Itihasa Eka Drishti* p 65

3 *Dialogues of the Buddha* part I p 163

else and is very likely meant to be rather the hero of a tale than an historical character

Edward J. Thomas the author of the *Life of Buddha* commenting on the episode of Bimbisara's first meeting with Buddha observes "Here we have an earlier account which like the earliest Pāli knows nothing of the Bimbisara story" ¹ He further remarks "Another indication that the Bimbisara story is an addition is that in the canonical account Gotama does not reach the Magadha country until after leaving both his teachers" ² Concluding his comments on the chief events of the six years of austerities Thomas writes "Between the canonical account and the story usually told there is a gap of several centuries. Even the canonical story is not contemporary tradition and the first question to ask is not whether the additional stories are historical but whether they are as old as canonical account. In some cases they contradict it others contradict one another and have the appearance of commentators' inventions which have developed differently in different schools. This is seen not only in the various elaboration of Buddha's contest with Mara but in different accounts of his meditation under the rose apple tree his journey to Rājagṛha or Vesālī and his first words. The meeting with Bimbisara is not only told variously but is inserted in the narrative at different places" ³

Critical examination of the Jain proofs also renders some of them to be merely legendary. It

1. *Life of Buddha* Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. London Third Edition 1949 p. 63

2. *Ibid* p. 68 foot note 2
The Life of Buddha pp. 79-80

would be rather difficult to distinguish decisively between the real and imaginary proofs whatever they may be. After all it is only our speculation on the basis of which we class some to be imaginary. Under the circumstances it would be impossible to reach a positive decision by distinguishing between reality and imagination.

The only criterion that can solve this problem decisively is the chronological consideration of Mahavira Buddha and Bimbisara. On the basis of the comparative study of the *Agamas* and the *Tripitakas* it is found that Mahavira was born in 599 B C, renounced the world in 569 B C, achieved omniscience in 557 B C and attained the *Viriana* in 527 B C while Buddha was born in 582 B C, renounced the world in 554 B C, achieved enlightenment in 547 B C and attained the *Nirvana* in 502 B C. Also the dates of accession and death of Bimbisara are found to be 582 B C and 544 B C respectively.¹ It therefore follows that the period of contemporaneity of Bimbisara with omniscient Mahavira is thirteen years, while that of Bimbisara with enlightened Buddha is just three years. And during these three years too Mahavira was living. Mahavira sojourned at Rajagṛha during his first monsoon after omniscience. At the commencement of this sojourn² Śrenika accepted *saṃyaktva* i.e. formal expression of faith in *Nirgrantha* religion while Abhaya Kumāra etc. accepted *saravaktva* i.e. faith in *Nirgrantha* religion together with the lay-

1 For detailed account of the chronological facts see the author's *The Contemporaneity and Chronology of Mahavira and Buddha*.

2 *Tirth* See part II p. 11

One more proof of Śrenika's staunchness in the Nirgrantha religion is that the number of initiations of his queens and princes in the Buddhist order is quite negligible compared to that of the Jain order.

We also find evidence of Śrenika being a Jain hereditarily. His father is said to have faith (*Samyaktva*) in the religion of Pārśva and to have accepted the lay disciple's vows¹ (*anuvratas*). According to Dr Kashi Prasad Jayasawal the noted historian the ancestors of Śrenika had migrated to Magadha from Kāśī. It is also believed that it was the same dynasty of Kāśī in which Tirathanakara Pārśva was born². On the basis of this belief it may be concluded that the Jain religion was Śrenika's family faith. According to the Jain narrative although Śrenika was a Jain by family faith he had relinquished it temporarily during his

called on Buddha (Cf Rhys Davids *Buddhist India* p. 88) during a rainy season, passed in the Rajagṛha. However the *Arthashastra* of the *Anguttara Nikaya* tells us that Buddha passed only the second, third, fourth, seventeenth and twentieth rainy season after the enlightenment at Rajagṛha. Of the forty six rainy seasons the remaining twenty five were spent at Sravastī and the last at Vaiśālī. Then how is it possible that Ajātasatru's accession took place only seven or eight years before Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and that he met Buddha only seven or eight years before his *Nirvāṇa*?

- 1 *Śrīmatsa svajinadhīsa sasanambhojasaṃpāṇa*
Saṃvāda sasa pun atma so(aya) n atadī arabi nat
—T nāstisat kapa uttchar t am book X canto VI v. 8
- 2 Quoted by Dr J B Jais in his *Bhārīya Itihāsa* Eka Dīpti
 p. 62 (Bhārīya Jnanapīṭha Banaras 1957)
Ibid p. 62

exile in his princelood II might be that during that period he might have followed the lax Śramanas who were referred to in the course of discussion with Śramana Anathī II is quite natural that Śrenika whose father and forefathers were Jain should have been also Jain by birth

It is undoubtedly true that during the last three years of his life Śrenika was in contact with Buddha and his order This relation however does not seem to be more profound than a mere courteous and sympathetic one

The above statement is corroborated by the fact that Rājagṛha was the chief centre of activities of Mahāvira and his order Mahāvira himself passed fourteen "rainy seasons" there and also often visited it during the other months of the year Also people of Rājagṛha were followers of Pārśva the preceding Tīrthāṅkara even before the advent of Mahāvira It therefore cannot be doubted that Śrenika's discipleship was one of the chief factors in making Rājagṛha the main centre of activities of Mahāvira and the Nigraṇtha (Jain) order

It was not Pāṇḍyā but Śrāvastī which was the centre of activities of Buddha and the Buddhist order There only were situated the Jetavana of Anāthapiṇḍika and the Pūrārama of Mṛgīrmātī There too was the King Prasenajit one of the foremost followers of Buddha It was there that Buddha sojourned twenty six "rainy seasons" while only five at Rājagṛha On the other hand Mahāvira passed only one rainy season at a remarkable fact that just as Mahāvira Śrenika is ~~also~~ a Tīrthāṅkara

ted for Prasenjit to become a Buddha¹ On the whole it appears that Śrenika was the follower of Mahāvīra and Prasenjit was the follower of Buddha

Famous historian Dr V A Smith expressed the same opinion He writes He (Śrenika) appears to have been a Jaina in religion and sometimes coupled by Jaina tradition with Ashoka's grandson Samprati a notable patron of the creed of Mahāvīra² Dr Smith further concludes Being related through his mother to the reigning kings of Videha Magadha and Anga he (Mahāvīra) was in a position to gain official patronage for his teaching and is recorded to have been in personal touch with both Bimbisāra and Ajātasatru who seem to have followed his doctrine³

CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE NAMES

Bhimbhasara etc

In the Jain canons the names such as Bhambhasāra Bhimbhasāra and Bhimbhasāra have been frequently used for Bimbisāra⁴ The word Bhambhasāra is mostly used in the later

1 *Anagata-vamsa Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* vol II p 174

2 *The Oxford History of India* p 45

3 *Ibid* pp 51 -

4 (a) *Seniye bhambhasare*

—*Nagadhammakahao* book I chapter XIII ■ 1896
(Surat 1951)

(b) *Seniye bhambhasare Seniye bhimbhasare*

—*Uval Sutra* 17 p 23 119 p 45 119 p 115
(Surat 1937)

(c) *Seniye bhimbhasare*

—*Theragatha Sutta* chapter IX p 438 ■ (Surat 1920)

Sanskrit and Prakrit works¹ The words *Bhambha* *Bhumbha* and *Bhumbhi* are all synonyms used in the sense of kettle drum (*Bheri*)² The episode which brought about this name has been described in several works as follows : Once when the prince's palace caught fire all the princes fled taking with them various precious things which each considered most valuable Śrenika however considering the kettle drum as the sign of victory of kings took it with him That is how he acquired an *alias* *Bhambhāsira* ³

Vijayendra Suri the famous Jain author considers *Bhambhāsira* as the only true form and has tried⁴ to prove all others to be incorrect But this does not appear to be proper In fact all these versions are found in the original *Agamas* in several places Even if we accept Vijayendra Suri's contention that words *Bhimbha* etc are not synonymous with *Bhambha* the fact remains that they have been appended to Śrenika Thus they being proper nouns convey the meaning conferred to them The question of canonical proper nouns to be incorrect does not arise at all Vijayendra Suri corroborates his contention by quoting *Thanaga Commentary*—
Bhambha til dhakka sa saro jasia sa Bhambha

1 *Abhidhāna Chintamāni* section III v 376 *Upadēśhamālā* with commentary p 334 *Rishi Maṇḍal Prakāśan* p 143 *Śri Bhāratesh ara Bhakabali* Commentary part I p 22 *Avashyaka Churni* vol II p 158

2 *Paṭya-Sadda Mahannir* pp 194 207

3 Seniya Kumāreṇa paṇe jyaadhakka kaddhaya pavisiṇam
Piṇṇa tathena tae bhanyo so bhambhasaro

—*Upadēśhamālā* with commentary, p 334a.

4 *Trithankara Mahānir*, part II pp 616, 617

sarah It appears to be an optical illusion that he has made use of this quotation to prove his contention. On the contrary the fact ■ that in the edition of *Thananga Commentary* from which he quotes this line ■ given— *Bhimbhi iti* *Sa mtha*

(*Bhimbhisarah*)¹ The original canonical text which has been commented upon here clearly reads—

Senie raja Bhimbhisare The commentator Sri Abhayadeva Suri also makes it clear in that context — *tera kumratte pradipanahe jayadhakka gehamtsakanta tatah pitra Bhimbhisara ukto*²

Dr Pischel also endorses the form *Bhimbhisāra*³
Bimbisara

According to the Buddhist tradition Śrenika has another *alias* viz Bimbisara *Bimbi* means gold and because he had golden complexion he was named Bimbisāra⁴ According to the Tibetan sources *Bimbi* was the name of Śrenika's mother and therefore he was Bimbisāra⁵

The forms *Bhimbhisāra* and *Bimbisāra* are obviously very similar to each other. Although their similarity is a matter of research it seems that the same name has been adopted in two forms due to the differences in dialect and pronunciation.

Śrenika

The name Śrenika (Prakrit *Seniya* and Pāli *Seniya*) is common to both the Jain and the Buddhist traditions. In both the traditions however Śrenika

1 Published by Agamodaya Samiti, Surat 1919

■ 46: a

G am natic De Prakr i Sprachen para 201

Udana Atti akatha 104

W W Rockhill *Life of Buddha* p 16

is generally referred to as Senie Bhimbhūra and Seniya Bimbisāra' respectively. In both the etymological interpretation of the word Srenika is almost similar. According to the Jain sources because he established Srenis (i.e. different classes of artisans) he was named Srenika.¹ According to the Buddhist sources he was called Srenika since he was proclaimed lord of eighteen Srenis (classes) of artisans.² In both the traditions the number of Srenis is eighteen.³ Even the names of the Srenis are almost similar. The Jain canon *Jambudīpāṇṇatti* describes in great details the eighteen classes of artisans comprising nine *Naru*⁴ and nine *Karu*.⁵ But the Buddhist sources do not furnish the names of these Srenis either uniformly or systematically. Although the names given in *Mahāvastu*⁶ are very much similar to those found in the *Jambudīpāṇṇatti*, their number has been increased to thirty. Dr R. C. Majumdar has compiled twenty seven names of Srenies calling them from various sources. It is clear that he has not cared to look up the *Jambudīpāṇṇatti* otherwise he

- 1 *Srenik kajaṭi srenika magadheshvārah*
— *Abhidhāna Chintamani* with the Author's Commentary
māṭiā kanda ver. 376
- 2 *Sapitrastadasatu sreni va ataristah atavva srenyo bimbisara
iti khvatah*
— *Vinaya Pitaka* Gilgit Manuscript
- 3 *Jambudīpāṇṇatti* Taksasakara III *Jataka Anthakatha*
Mugapakkhajataka no. 538
- 4 Kumbhara pattaella suvanakara suvakara ya
Gandhavya karavagga malikara kachchhakara
Tamboliya ya ee navappayara ya narua bhanja
- 5 Aha nam navappayara karuavanne pavakkhami
Chammyaru Jantapilaga gamchhu chhimpaya
kamareya
Sivaga guara bhullaga dhiyara vannai atthadaa
- 6 Vol III p. 113 and pp. 442-43

would have no occasion to write that it is difficult to know what these eighteen Śreṇikas are ¹Some *Buddhist Commentators* (such as Buddhaghoṣa and Dhammapāla) explain Seniya as meaning "possessed of a large army (Sena) or belonging to Seniya gotra" ²

Father's Name

As per the Śvetāmbara tradition of the Jains Śrenika's father's name was Prasenjit ³ The *Uttarapurana*⁴ of the Digambara tradition on the other hand gives his father's name as Kūpika which is obviously incorrect Digambara Acharya Hariṣena in his work *Brhatkathakosa* (story 55) mentions Śreṇika's father's name as Upaśrenika ⁵ It is also mentioned that Upaśrenika banished Śrenika from his kingdom and appointed Śrenika's step brother Chilāti as his successor Chilāti however failed to administer state affairs properly Hence the ministers dethroned him and made Śrenika the king Chilāti then renounced the world and became a Jain ascetic ⁶ *Srīmad Bhagavat Purana* calls Śrenika as Vidhisira and his father as Kṣetrojña Elsewhere his father's names are given as Bhattiya Mahapadma Hemajit Kṣetroja Kṣetroja etc ⁷

Queens

The Jain works give names of twenty five queens

- 1 *Corporate Life in Ancient India* vol II p 18
- 2 *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* vol II pp 39 1284
- 3 *Tattvasamkalapa pravaracharitam* bk X canto VI verse 1
- 4 74/418
- 5 *Tataparrenika raja*
- 6 Dr Kamta Prasad Jain *Some Jain Kings and Heroes* p 12 (Jain Mitra Mandal Delhi 1941)
- 7 12/1

C Rajchoudhury *Pala and History of Ancient India*

Names of thirteen queens—Nandī etc. and 100 queens—Kali Sukali etc. are found in the *Amṛtaśāstra*. They were all initiated by Mahāvīra after Śrenika's demise. We have seen Chelā being mentioned as the principal queen in the *Dāṇyaśāstra*. There appears in the *Amṛtaśāstra* name of a queen *Apalagandhā* which is not so well known. The *Āyadhammakahāṇḍya* gives detailed description of Queen Dhāriṇī of Śrenika.

According to the *Vinaya Pitaka* King Bimbisāra had five hundred wives.¹ A physician Jivakakumār Bhṛtya cured Bimbisāra of fistula with one ointment anointing. pleased the king offered her the ornaments of the five hundred women of the palace. It cannot be ascertained whether these 500 women were Śrenika's queens. The Buddhist tradition mentions Kosaladevī sister of the King Prasenjit as Bimbisāra's chief queen. Bimbisāra received as dowry a village *śāḍāpāna* or *śāḍāpāna* as revenue.² Queen Khāṇḍavī princess of Māgadh country. She was proud and very party. Ultimately she was enlightened and converted by Buddha.³ Padmāvatī a courtesan of Ujjain is also believed to be Śrenika's wife.⁴ In the *Amṛtaśāstra* a reference is found to a queen *Vasudhā* as a queen of Bimbisāra. The *Iti* and the

1 With *Bhāṣya* part I p 17

2 Ch I aph 8 (p 14a)

3 *Mahāvagga* 8 I 15

4 *Jātaka* 2403 *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names* p 186

5 *Therīgāthā Anthakatha* 139-140

6 *Therīgāthā* 31-32

7 *Sacred Books of the East* vol X, p 166

Buddhist versions about the queens of Bimbisāra are disparate. It seems that Bimbisāra had many wives and the tradition with which these queens were mainly connected has referred to them in its works. It is also possible that some of the queens might have been referred to in both the traditions under different names.

Princes

Prince Kunika (Ajatasatru) was heir apparent to Śrenika. The Buddhist tradition refers to some of the princes. Abhayakumāra is mentioned as the son of a courtesan queen Padmavati¹. Another son of Bimbisāra born to Courtesan Ambapali was Vimal Kondañña who later became a Buddhist monk². Silava is also mentioned as Bimbisāra's son. His brother Ajatasatru wished to kill him but failed owing to Silava's destiny. Later on Silava became a monk and also an *arhat*³. Another son of Bimbisāra was Jayasena⁴.

In the Jain tradition an elaborate description of many princes beside Kunika is to be found. The *Anuttaravajya*⁵ gives an account of the following ten princes: (1) Jāli (2) Mayali (3) Uvayali (4) Purimsena (5) Vārisena (6) Dibadanta (7) Laṭṭha danta (8) Veballa (9) Vebayasa and (10) Abhayakumāra. Out of these the first seven were the sons of Queen Dharinī. Veballa and Vebayasa of Queen

1 *Therīgatha* 31-32

2 *Therīgatha Aṭṭhakatha* 64

3 *Therīgatha* 608-619

4 *Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakatha* 2f93.

5 *Navarām satta dharinī suv velalla vebasa chellanae Abhayaṣaṇa nanaṣaṇa rajagīṣe nayaṣe sen ye raya nanda devī*
—*Anuttaravajya vāga I*

Chelanā and Abhayakumara of Queen Nanda. The same canon in the context of another event mentions the following thirteen princes (1) Dihasena (2) Mahasena (3) Latthadanta (4) Gudhadanta (5) Suddhadanta (6) Halla (7) Duma (8) Dumasena (9) Mahadumasena (10) Siha (11) Sihasena (12) Mahasihasena and (13) Pupnasena. In the Nirayavaliya the following ten princes are mentioned to be the sons of Queen Kali, Queen Sukali and other queens (1) Kālakumāra (2) Sukālakumāra (3) Mahakalakumāra (4) Kanhakumāra (5) Sukaphakumāra (6) Mahakanhakumāra (7) Virakanhakumāra (8) Ramakanhakumāra (9) Senakaphakumāra (10) Mahasenakanhakumāra. The two princes—Meghakumāra and Nandiṣena² are renowned in the Jain traditions.

The Jain canons do not merely mention the names of these princes but also furnish their detailed life sketches in proper context. Out of these princes Kalakumāra and other nine were killed in Mahāsīlakaṇṭaka war³ and while the remaining ones were initiated as monks.

1 *Vajradhammakāhaṇī* chapter I

2 *Trisastisāṣaṭha puruṣachārdaṇam* 10/6

3 Description of this war is given in the next chapter

CHAPTER II

AJĀTAŚATRU KŪNIKA

In both the Buddhist and the Jain traditions Kūnika (Ajātaśatru) enjoys an equally important place. Both the traditions consider him as their follower and have their own grounds for such belief.

Buddhist Account

According to the Buddhist tradition the meeting between Ajātaśatru and Buddha alluded to in the *Samannaphala Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* was the first one. In the meeting he became a devotee of Buddha his religion and order.¹ Another instance of Ajātaśatru's devotion towards Buddha is found in his building a great *stupa* over Buddha's ashes. When Buddha's ashes were being distributed Ajātaśatru sent a message to the Mallas of Kūsinara saying Buddha was a *Āsatvīya* I am also a *Āsatvīya* I must also get a share of his ashes. On the advice of Brahmin Drona he got a share and built a *stupa* thereon.²

According to the *Samannaphala Sutta*, on the night of Kartik Purnimā (full moonday) Ajātaśatru

1 *Esaham bhante bhagvantaṃ sa anam paricchami dhammam cha bhikkhu saṅgham cha Upasakam man bhag a dha et i ajjatoṇṇe paṇipetam saranam gataṃ*

—*Dīgha Nikāya* 1/2/6 p 75 (Nalanda edition)

2 Pt Rahula *Samkṛtiyāna Buddhacharya* p 509

came to know of Buddha from his state physician Jivaka Kaumara Bhṛtya and immediately he visited Buddha with his five hundred queens riding on five hundred elephants. It is difficult to say when Ajātaśatru had his first interview with Mahāvira. Available records of his interviews with Mahāvira indicate only old acquaintance and deep devotion.

Jala Description
The first Upanga *Uṇṇa* throws light primarily on the relations of Kunika with Mahāvira. Here is also given a fine description of his capital Champa nagari and the administration of his kingdom. Elucidating the devotion of Kūnika towards Mahāvira it states that he had appointed an information officer (*Pra ritti Yaduka*) who received a high salary. His duty was to keep him abreast of Mahāvira's everyday activities. Under him he had several workers who were also highly paid. Through them the information officer used to receive everyday news of Mahāvira and conveyed the same to Kūnika.¹

The description of the advent of Mahāvira to Champānagari and Kunika's devotion towards him in the *Uṇṇa Sūtra* is very vivid and inspiring. Had it been the subject of the review of the research scholars like *Samannaphala Sutta* it would have been equally significant. The fact is that the research made on the *Agamas* is not so copious as that on the *Tripitakas*. If this research were undertaken

1 *Tassanāṃ kaṇṭhassa paṇṇo ekke parise vīṭṭakare vīṭṭe bhāṇāṃ parivīṭṭave bhāṇavāṃ taddhavasāṃ pavīṭṭim nivedatī Tassa am puṇṇaṃ bahare anṇe purisa dāna bhāṭṭi bhāṭṭa veṇa bhāṇavāṃ pavīṭṭi aṇṇa bhāṇavāṃ taddhavasāṃ pavīṭṭim nivedenti*

many important issues would have received definite and decisive solutions. The *Tripitakas* are not so informative about Ajātasatru (Kunika) as are the *Agamas*.

Message of Mahavira's Arrival

On hearing the news of Mahavira's arrival in the suburbs of Champanagari with his 14000 monks and 36000 nuns the information officer was very much pleased and happy. After taking a bath he put on an auspicious dress and adorned himself with very light but very precious ornaments. He then proceeded to the State assembly of Kunika the son of Bimbisara through the Champānagari. With his greetings for the king's victory he spoke: 'Beloved of the gods! Śramana Lord Mahavira whom you wish to pay respects whose very glimpse is most pleasing to your heart and is invigorating for you and whose name and clan is a source of great happiness to your honour touring from village to village has reached the suburbs of Champanagari and is about to arrive at Pūrṇa Bhadra Chaitya. May this news be pleasing to you.'

Kunika son of Bimbisāra was very happy to hear this message from the information officer. His eyes and face became bright and radiant. He at once got up from his throne and took off his sandals. All the five signs of royalty¹ were cast aside. Having taken *Ekasatika Uttarāsanga* (the traditional posture of paying homage) with folded hands he walked seven or eight paces forward in

¹ Sword, crown, the royal umbrella, sandals and the *chamara* (a sort of flapper made up of wild cow's tail used for flapping flies away - also a symbol of kingship).

the direction of Mahavira. He drew in his left foot. Similarly he moved his right foot down to the ground. He bowed down to the ground thrice and then rising a little folded his hands in reverence. Touching his forehead with the palm of his hand he greeted Mahavira with *namotthunam* (eulogy) and said - My warmest respects to Śramana Lord Mahavira who is the pioneer a Tirthankara and desirous of attaining salvation, in my religious teacher and preceptor. From here I worship Lord Mahāvira who takes notice of me from there.¹

Having thus worshipped and paid homage to Lord Mahavira, Kunika re-ascended the throne. He awarded 108 000 silver coins to the information officer and ordered - Inform me again when Lord Mahavira graces Champā with his visit and arrives in the Purna Bhadra Chaitya.

Arrival of Mahavira at Champa

Radiated by a thousand rays the sun rose in the sky. In the delightful atmosphere of the morning Lord Mahavira arrived at Champa and stayed in the Pūrṇa Bhadra Chaitya. Assuming an appropriate position he took to inspiring his soul with self-restraint and austere living. All round and throughout the Champānagarī there was a universal talk - Śramana Lord Mahavira has come over

1 *Namoatthunam samanassa bhagavāo Mahāvirassa adigarassa tuhaṅgarassa .. jāva sampavukamass mama dhammayariyassa dhammanadesagassa vandamī nam bhagvantaṃ tatthagayāṃ ihā passā me (me se) bhagavāṃ tatthagae jhagayāṃ tikattu vandāi namamsā*

here and ■ staying at Pūrṇa Bhadrā Chaitya. Even the hearing of his name and clan is highly beneficial. What to speak of getting his holy glimpse. Beloved of the gods! let us all go and pay our respectful homage to Lord Mahavīra. It will be highly fruitful and bring happiness to us in this world and hereafter.

Thereafter people bathed, adorned themselves with beautiful dresses and ornaments and precious garlands of pearls. Some rode on horse backs, some on elephants and some seated in palanquins and a considerable number on foot set out for visiting Lord Mahavīra.

The information officer gave this pleasant news to Kūṇika. The king rewarded him with a gift of 12,50,000 silver coins.¹ Kūṇika, son of Bimbisāra, called for the chief officer of the army and ordered: 'Decorate the Hastiratna elephant. Arrange to get the army consisting of four divisions (horses, elephants, chariots and infantry) ready. Keep chariots ready for the chief queen, Subhadrā, and other queens etc. to ride in. Cleanse City Chanpā inside and outside. Decorate the streets and highways. Prepare platforms for the spectators at different sites. I shall go to worship and rever Lord Mahavīra.'

1. There is no word 'Silver' in the original text but traditionally it is believed that a universal monarch's gift is of twelve and a half crore golden coins, a Vasudeva's of twelve and a half lac golden coins and a regional king's of twelve and a half lac silver coins. Cf. *Uṇṇai Sūtra* (Hindi translation) ■ 133 (Sailana, Mādhyā Pradesh 1963).

All preparations were made in accordance with the king's orders. The king rode on the Hastiratna Queen Subhadra and other queens got into chariots. Thus the king with his great glory of the army proceeded to visit Lord Mahāvira¹. After driving through the central part of Champa City the king reached the vicinity of Purna Bhadra Chaitya. The king from a distance saw Lord Mahāvira's insignia of Tirthankara and left the Hastiratna. He then cast aside all the five signs of royalty and came before Lord Mahāvira. Having acquired the five essentials he paid his homage and then sat down worshipping the Lord with mental, vocal and physical reverence.

Sermons of Mahāvira

The Lord delivered sermons to the audience in Ardha Māgadhī dialect. There exists universe, non-universe, soul, matter, bondage, salvation, virtue, vice, attraction, prevention and effacement, anger, vanity, deceit, greed, etc. There also exist desisting from violence, falsehood, stealing, coition, etc. All affirmations rest in existence while all negations are with non-existence. Good acts result in good while evil ones result in bad. Soul confronts with virtue and vice. Soul passes through the cycle of birth and death. There are two kinds of religion: one for the saints and the other for the house holders. The former consists of renouncing the worldly attachments and abstaining from violence, falsehood, etc. while the latter prescribes the twelve vows viz. five *Anuvratas* three *Gunavratas*².

1 Consult the *Charal Sutra* for the detailed description.
 2 Kunika's *gagā* how and matching

and four *Sikṣaratas* ¹ The assembly dispersed after attending the sermon The king also got up and paying his homage thus said Lord your Nirgrantha preachings (i.e. tenets of the Jain religion) are profound emphatic comprehensive and matchless While preaching religion you have preached calmness while explaining calmness you have explained prudence and so also non indulgence while discoursing about non indulgence you have preached for non committing sinful deeds There is no other Brahman or Śramana who can preach religion so well what to speak of anything more than this ² Submitting so the king returned to wherefrom he came ³

Follower of Jainism or Buddhism ?

On comparative study of the *Samannaphala Sutta* and the chapter of the *Uvāṇi Sūtra* the latter one is found to be more proved and impressive In the *Samannaphala Sutta* the only evidence of Ajatāśatru being a follower of Buddha is the statement that O God take me in thy shelter as thy fold handed worshipper from to day In the chapter of the *Uvāṇi* the appointment of information officer king's getting off from the throne his saluting with *Nammoshiṇam* (the Jain tradition of paying reverence) and meeting with devotion are quite secure proofs of his being a follower of Lord Mahāvīra The king's assertion that there is no

1 For details consult *Uvāṇi Sūtra* (Ed. N. A. Gore, Poona 1953)

2 *Naṭṭhi nam aṇṇe keḷi saṇaṇe va maḥam va je vṛṇam ihamam ma lakkhiṭṭaḥ Kimāṇa pama etto a taratarāṇi*
— *Uvāṇi Sūtra Sūtra 25*

Based on the *Uvāṇi Sūtra*

Brāhamana or Śramana who could preach such religion as you did fully confirms and unequivocally establishes his faith in the Nirgrantha religion

It appears that Ajātaśatru's submission to Buddha was just a formal thing. But never does it seem likely that in fact he ever became a follower of Buddha. King Ajātaśatru had only once met Buddha,¹ whereas he had often visited Mahāvira.² Not only this the king had even attended the religious discourses of Sudharma Swami the successor of Mahāvira.³

Dr Smith writes: Both the Buddhists and the Jainas claimed him as one of themselves. The Jaina claim appears to be well founded.⁴ According to Dr Radha Kumud Mukherjee Ajātaśatru was a follower of Mahāvira in the days of Buddha and Mahāvira.⁵ He further states that: As usual the Jains give both Ajātaśatru and Uśāsibhadda a good character, presumably for their faith in Jainism; the reason why their character is blackened by the Buddhist.⁶

There are many more reasons for Ajātaśatru not being a follower of Buddha: such as—his intimacy

1 Rhys Davids *Buddhist India* p. 88

2 *Thananga Commentary* 4-3

3 *Parisista Parva canto II* vv 15-54

4 V. A. Smith *Oxford History of India* Second edition Oxford 1923 p. 51

5 *Hindu Civilization* pp 190-1 (Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan Bombay 1964)

6 *Ibid*

with Devadatta ■ rebel disciple of Buddha ■ enmity with Vajjis a favourite clan of Buddha ■ his battle against Prasenjit a staunch devotee and follower of Buddha

The Buddhist tradition looks on him as a patricide¹ while the Jain regards him as most humble to his father after the repentance for his bad deed². These references tend to show Ajatāśatru's distance from the former tradition and nearness to the latter.

Buddha's disregard for Ajatāśatru is clearly surmised from the fact that after the king had heard the discourses on *Samannaphala* and gone Buddha addressed his disciples so. The king does not have good thinking. He is an unfortunate king. Had he not murdered his religious minded father he could have attained in his very present state religious insight³. With reference to Devadatta Buddha remarked "Monks he keeps friendship and lives and remains in contact with Magadharāja Ajatāśatru who is an evil man"⁴.

Once Buddha was giving a discourse to King Bimbisāra in the royal palace. The child Ajatāśatru was seated in Bimbisāra's lap. Bimbisāra was not very attentive to the lessons and was often caring to fondle Ajatāśatru. Then Buddha drew Bimbisāra's attention and narrated an anecdote of the substance

1 *Digha Nikaya Samannaphala Sutta*

2 *Udena Sutta* (Hindi Edition) p. 26 *Senaprazana* chapter III question 237

Digha Nikaya Samannaphala Sutta

Vinaya Pitaka Chullavagga Sanghabhedakakāhanāhāra 7

in which he tried to convert the King who are much attached to him but he still is a very killer".

Ajātasatru deputed his Minister Vassakara to Buddha for desired conversion. In fact this was nothing but a conspiracy to know about some secrets of victory. Had Ajātasatru been a follower of Buddha, he would not have played such a deceitful trick.

It might be contended that Ajātasatru's firmness in Buddhism is clearly expressed by the episode in which he got killed 500 *Āśvins* (Jain monks) believed to be the murderers of Maudgalyāyana the chief disciple of Buddha.¹ But this is only mentioned in the *Atthakathā* (commentary) and thus has no greater importance than being merely a heresay. There are some more narrations in the *Atthakathas* such as following — Who should inform a problem for his masters. They thought that the news should be so conveyed as not to shock the king's heart. Pretending to cure the effects of a bad dream they arranged a *Chatur Madhu Snana* (bathing in four sweet liquids) and informed him of Buddha's *Nirvana* in that environment.

Even then Ajātasatru fell into a trance as he heard the news. Twice again he was made to bathe in the *Chatur Madhu* and then only he regained consciousness and expressed deep regrets.² According to another tradition Minister Vassakara made

1 *Jatakathakatha* Thera Jataka 238

2 *Dhammapada Atthakatha* Part III p. 66 ff

3 *Dhammapada Atthakatha* Part III p. 66 ff

Buddha's death known to Ajataśatru by showing him the pictorial biography of Buddha from birth to Nirvana¹. These events attribute to Ajātaśatru's devotion for Buddha. But since these narrations have been taken from the later works they cannot be taken as authentic ones.

Devadatta's disciple Upaka the son of Minḍikā after having discussions with Buddha came to Ajatasatru and condemned Buddha. But Ajataśatru got enraged and asked him to get away². The *Atthakatha* makes further addition that Ajataśatru got Upaka turned out by his servants with neck grip³. This also is not a proof of Ajataśatru being a follower of Buddha. A wise man deprecates those who speak low and unmannerly of others. Had Ajatasatru been a devotee of Buddha Upaka would not have dared to go to him and defile Buddha. It was only because he took Ajataśatru to be his master Devadatta's well wisher that he dared to do so.

There are certain references available in the later works which point to Ajātaśatru's antagonism to Buddhism. According to the *Avadaśataka* King Bimbisara built a *stupa* on Buddha's nails and hairs during Buddha's life time. Ladies of the harem used to worship this *stupa* with incences flowers etc. Ajataśatru put a ban on this worship immediately after his accession to the throne. When Srimatī a lady of the harem still worshipped the *stupa* she was awarded death penalty⁴. According to *Theragatha Atthakatha*

1 *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* p. 320

2 *Anguttara Nikaya* 4-8 183

Encyclopedia of Buddhism p. 319

Avadaśataka 54

Ajātaśatru even tried to get murdered his younger brother Sīlava who later on became a Buddhist monk¹

These anecdotes do not support the contention that Ajātaśatru was a follower of Buddhism but on the contrary they tend to prove that he was an antagonist of Buddhism. Nevertheless they do not carry much significance.

Well known scholar of Buddhism Dr T W Rhys Davids clearly expresses his views that "At the close of the discourse the King is stated to have openly taken the Buddha as his guide in future and to have given expression to the remorse, he felt at the murder of his father. But it is also distinctly stated that he was not converted. There is no evidence that he really after the moment when his heart was touched continued to follow the Buddha's teaching. He never so far as we know waited again either upon the Buddha or upon any member of his order to discuss ethical matters, and we hear of no material support given by him to the order during the Buddha's lifetime.

We are told however that after the Buddha's death he asked (on the ground that he had the Buddha was Kṣatriya) for a portion of the relics that he obtained them and built a *stupa* or burial mound over them. And though the oldest authority says nothing about it younger works state that on the convocation of the First Council at Rājagṛha, shortly after the decease it was the king who provided and prepared that hall at the entrance to the

1 *Theragāthā Arthakathā gāthā* 609-19

Sattapanni cave where the rehearsal of the doctrine took place. He may well have thus showed favour to the Buddhists without at all belonging to their party. He would only in so doing be following the usual habit so characteristic of Indian monarchs of patronage towards all schools. ¹

Mother's Longings during Pregnancy

The description of Kunika's birth and his revolt against his father is almost identical in both the traditions. We find this description in the Jain canon *Nirayavali* and *Digha Nikaya Atthakatha* of the Buddhists. Both the traditions name his father Śrenika (Bimbisāra). His mother's name was Chellapā according to the Jain tradition and Kosaladevi according to the Buddhists. The Jains state that his mother on the day of conception saw a lion in a dream but the Buddhists do not mention anything about it. According to the Jain tradition the mother longed during pregnancy to eat the fried and baked meat of King Śrenika's heart muscles and drink wine. According to the Buddhists she longed only to drink the blood from the king's arms. Both the traditions state that the king fulfilled these longings. According to the Jain tradition Abhaya Kumāra slyly so manouvered that the king's heart muscle was taken out and given to her but in fact it was not even touched. The Buddhists state that the king's arm blood was extracted by a doctor and the mother's longing fulfilled. The queen later felt aggrieved of

this incident and even attempted to destroy the embryo in the womb. According to the Buddhists, this she attempted to do as the astrologers had predicted the would be child to be a murderer of his father. The Jains state that this she attempted out of her own thinking as to what could be expected of one who even while in the womb, damaged his father's heart.

Srenika's Affection for his Son

According to the Jain tradition, Ch'apa, the queen mother threw away the child on a slam-ban after its birth. There a cock bit his little finger. The finger bled. No sooner did the king come to know about this he out of affection, felt aggrieved and then quickly came to the spot. Picking up the child he brought him to the queen and cured the finger by sucking the blood from the wound. The Buddhist tradition gives the following account of it. "When the child was born the king's minister apprehending that she might kill it took away the child. Later after some time the child was returned to the queen who under the impact of her motherly love for the son willingly nourished him. Once child Ajatasatru developed an abscess on his finger. The servants took the weeping child to the king in the court. The king took the finger in his mouth. The abscess bled out. The king out of his affection for the son did not spit out the pus but swallowed it.

Father's Imprisonment

The Jain account of Kūnika's plot against her says that Kūnika being ambitious for

throne made connivance with his brothers. Putting his father into prison he himself occupied the throne. According to the Buddhist tradition it was Devadatta who instigated Ajatashatru for acquiring the throne and so he imprisoned his father in the hot house.

Patricide

According to Jain tradition Kunika on a ceremonial day went to his mother Chellana for saluting her feet. The mother did not accept his salutations. On being asked about the reason for her refusal to accept his salutations the mother narrated the episode regarding Śrenika's filial affection for his son and rebuked him for his foul deeds. It swayed Kunika's heart with love for his father. Having lamented for his misdeed he at once took up a chisel and set out to cut the chains to free his father. On seeing him come Śrenika anticipating of his imminent murder preferred to commit suicide. He instantly took a deadly poison *Talaputa* and ended his life.

The Buddhist tradition narrates that none else was allowed entry into the hot house where Bimbisāra was imprisoned except Kosaladevi the mother queen. Ajatashatru wanted to starve the king to death at the instance of Devadatta who forbade the killing of father with weapons. Kosaladevi under the pretext of seeing the king used to carry meals concealed under her laps and gave it to the king knowing of this. Ajatashatru ordered his servant Do not let my mother go with covered laps. Then she started carrying her meal.

in her head dress. When this too was so bidden, she carried the meals concealed in her garter too. On being prohibited for this too, the queen used to go to the king after taking bath in perfumed water and then smearing her body with the following sweet liquids. The king licked her body and kept himself alive for a few days. Ajatasatru finally stopped her visiting the king. Then the king used to walk about in his cell meditating. When Ajatasatru observed that the king was so doing, he called the barbers and ordered, 'Open the feet of my father the king with a weapon smear them with salt and oil and roast them on the charred wood coals.' The barbers did this and the king died.

Repentance

Both the traditions speak of Kūṅika's repentance at the death of Śrenika. According to the Jain tradition Kūṅika had already repented before the king's death for his misdeeds, but was about to lose his father's filial love from his mother. Seeing his father dead, he fell down on the earth as a *chamṛā* tree cut by a chopper's fall. Regarding consciousness after a couple of hours, he but shyly wept and exclaimed, 'Oh! What a sinner am I! How irreligious and doer of wicked deeds am I! I am imprisoned with chains my godly father. It is because of me that King Śrenika has died.' Being grief-stricken by this, he just after some time left Rājagṛha and resided in Champuṇḍī and made it the capital of Magadha.

According to the Buddhist tradition a son was born to Ajatashatru¹ on the day of Bimbisāra's death. Messengers delivered a written message about having a son in his hands. The king felt overjoyed with affection and filial love. Even his bones and marrows were seized of happiness. The joy he experienced at the birth of his son made him realise something of affection his own father must have felt for him. Immediately he ordered his servants to set free his father. Messengers also handed over to him the death news of Bimbisāra. On reading the news of his father's death he screamed and ran to his mother and asked, 'Did my father love me?' The mother narrated the episode of sucking the finger. Then he became all the more grief-torn and repented for his deeds.

Comments

Although the details in the episodes of dream, longings, finger wound, imprisonment etc. in the narratives of two traditions vary, there exists much similarity from the basic point of view. The difference in the episodical versions is not unnatural. Every major incident, even at the time of its happening, gets currency in diverse forms and versions. The more so when there is a lapse of time. The Jain canon *Nirjavalā* is believed to have been compiled before the beginning of Vikram era (56 B.C.)² while *Atthakathas* are regarded to have been written in the 5th century of Vikram era.³ It may well be a

1 Pt. Dalsukha Malavania *Acarya Jyotiṣa Jaina Darśana Samiti Gyan Pitha* Agre 1966 p. 29

2 Bhikṣu Dharmarakṣita *Acarya Buddhaghosa Mahābodhi Sāṭha Sarnath Varanasi* 1956 p. 7

cause of this difference. In all the traditions episodic matters getting transmitted by verbal versions are compiled in written forms only after a time gap of centuries. The Buddhist narration about the king's murder empathically exposes the cruelty of Ajatasatru while the Jains present it in a quite moderate way. The Buddhist version of cutting the feet, putting salt and roasting them appears to be much inhuman while according to the Jains Śreṇika suffered only imprisonment with no tortures like starving etc. Even death is stated to be the outcome of suicide. On the contrary Ajatasatru is accused of parricide as per the Buddhist tradition. All these facts tend to prove that Ajatasatru was a follower of Jainism.

His Mother

Both traditions give different names for Kunika's mother. According to the Jatakas Kosaladevi was the daughter of Mahākosala, the king of Kosala, i.e. sister of Prasenajit, the king of Kosala.¹ On the occasion of her marriage a village from the Kāśī state was given as a dowry. After Bimbisara's murder Prasenajit took back that village. There was a war and after one reverse Prasenajit was victorious. Taking Ajatasatru as his sister's son he spared him alive, concluded a treaty, married his daughter Vajra to him and gave the same village in dowry.²

In *Saṃyutta Nikāya* Ajatasatru has been mentioned as a son of Prasenajit's sister and also as

1 *Jataka* edited by Fambell vol. III p. 121

2 *Jataka Atthakatha* no. 249-253

Vedihaputta ¹ These names do not reconcile with each other. Here Buddhagoṣa has taken the meaning of *Vedehi* and *Pandita* and not the princess of Videha Kingdom. The fact is that Chellana (mentioned in the Jain tradition) being a daughter of Chetaka the chief of Vaishali Republic was *Vedehi*. Prasenajit's sister Kosaladevi could be a step-mother of Ajatasatru. According to the Tibetan tradition² and the *Amṭayurjhyana Sūtra*³ the name of Ajatasatru's mother was *Vedehi Vasavi* and also as she was a princess of the Videha State⁴. The use of the word *Videha* with this interpretation is found in abundance elsewhere too. Lord Mahavira has been called *Videha*, *Videhadinne*, *Videhajachche*⁵. Since Lord Mahavira was born in Videha he was called *Vedehi* his mother too was born in Videha kingdom so she was *Videhadattatamaja* and being the noblest among the *Vedehis* he has been called *Videhajata*⁶.

The great poet Bhasa in his drama *Swapna vasavadatta* has called king Udayana as *Videhaputra*⁷ because his mother was a princess of Videha.

1 *Sammuta Nkaya* 3/14

2 *Vedihaputtoti vedehi ti paritasshachana neta : panditithi saputto = attha*

—*Samutta Nikaya Atthakatha* vol I p 120

3 Rockhill *Life of Buddha* ■ 61

4 *SBE* vol XLIX p 166

5 Rockhill *Life of Buddha* p 63

6 *Kalpa Sutra* 110

7 *SBE* vol XXII p 246 Vasantakumara Chattopadhyaya *Kalpa Sutra* (Bengali edition) p 27

The Hindu Civilization (part II) ■ 199 (Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan Bombay 1964)

kingdom According to the Jain tradition Chellapā (mother of Kūṇika) and Mṛḡvātī mother of Udayana were real sisters being the daughters of King Cheṭaka of Vaiśālī¹ Lord Mahāvira's mother Trisālā was the sister of king Cheṭaka² There the epithets such as *Videhadinna* or *Videhaputra* are most natural and intelligible Even in the Jain canons Kūṇika has been called as *Videhaputra*³ According to Mr Rhys Davids King Bimbisāra had two queens one Kosaladevi sister of King Prasenajit the second one Videha Princess and Ajītasatru was the son of this Videha Princess⁴

According to the *Atthakatha* while King Bimbisāra was in prison in the hot house Queen Kosaladevi waited upon him In *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* the name of the waiting queen is stated as Khema and she is said to be the royal princess of Kosala kingdom⁵ But this obviously appears to be an error Khemā truly belonged to Madra Deśa⁶ It seems that in place of Kosaladevi the name of Khema has been mentioned erroneously In the Tibetan tradition and the *Amitayurdhyana Sutra* the name of the waiting queen has been mentioned as Vaidhī Vasvī who was the daughter of Vaiśālī's Commander Sīha⁷ Dr Radha Kumud Mukherjee writes that Vaidehī Vasvī can

1 *Arasaka Chūri* part II p 164

2 *Ibid* part I p 254

3 *Bhāgavati Sūtra* Sāṅkya 7 Uddāśaka 9 p 576

4 *Buddhist India* p 3

5 *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* II 316

6 *Therīgāthā Atthakatha* 139-43

7 *Rockhill Life of Buddha* p 62

be identified with Chellana¹ From these diversities in the Buddhist tradition nothing more can be inferred than that Ajatashatru was the son of princess of Videha and so he was called Vedehaputra It is not understandable why Acharya Buddhaghosa had been nourishing the wrong impression in interpreting the word *Vedehi* as *Pandita* and Ajatashatru as the son of Kosaladevi the princess of Kosala

Difference in Nomenclatures

There is a difference regarding the name and title in both the traditions The Jains have all through named him Kunika while the Buddhists have called him Ajatashatru Even in the *Upanishads*² and *Puranas*³ the name of Ajatashatru has been used Thus the factual position is that Kunika is the real name and Ajatashatru is an epithetical name Some time the title or the epithetic name enjoys more popularity than the real name Such as Yashodhamana was the original name and Mahāvīra an epithet but in practice Mahāvīra has been more popular In the general history of India only the name of Ajatashatru is current The name of Ajatashatru Kunika is found engraved on an edict at the Mathura's museum⁴ In fact this appears to be his full name The word Ajatashatru Kunika should be used in the modern literary works as this would be more expressive and correct

¹ *Hindu Civilization* (part II) p 181

² *Dialogues of Buddha* vol II p 78

³ *Jain Purana* chapter 99 sloka 319 *Matsya Purana* chapter 271 sloka 9

⁴ *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society* vol V part IV pp 550-51

The word Ajataśatru is interpreted in two forms One interpretation is Na jātaḥ śatrur yasya—One whose enemy is not even born ¹ and the other interpretation is Ajato(a)pī śatruh—a father's enemy even before birth ² The latter interpretation is made by Ācharya Buddhabhosa and it is in itself quite consistent but surely not natural Kūnika was an exalted and brave king He conquered many unconquerable enemies Thus the epithetic title Ajatasatru appears to be more expressive of his valour and glory rather than of a reproach The name Kūnika is derived from the word kunī which means a whit low Kūnika means bearer of a whit low ³ Ācharya Hemachandra says—

Rudhavrataṇaṇi sā tasya kuṇitābbhayaṇḡgulih

Tataḥ sapamśuramanāṇi so(a)bbyaśchīyat
Kūnikaḥ ⁴

In the *Anaṇḡyaka Churni* Kūnika has also been named Aśokachandra but it is rarely used ⁵

Mahaśīlākaṇṡaka Battle and Victory over the Vajjis

A historical event from the life of Ajataśatru according to the Jain tenents is Mahaśīlākaṇṡaka battle and in the Buddhist tradition this has been named as Victory over Vajjis Both traditions

¹ *Dialogues of Buddha* vol I p 78

² *Dīgha Nikaya Anthakatha* I 113

³ *Apte's Sanskrit English Dictionary* vol I p 580

⁴ *Tilastīlālakapūṇḡsa charitra*, canto V sarga II shloka 309

⁵ *Aśoka ana chanda utti aśoka chanda utti namam cha se katam tattha ja kukkuda upicchhenam kaṇaṇḡguli se vidḡḡa sukumaliya sa na paṇḡḡti sa kuṇiga jata lahe se dāṇḡ khyāṇḡ katam namam kuṇitoti*

differ from each other regarding the cause pattern and results of the battle but both agree about the victory of Magadha over the Vaishali Republic. Both Mahavira and Buddha were present at the time of this battle. Both have answered questions concerning this war. The description of this battle in both the traditions is most fascinating and expressive of the contemporary politics. The Jain version is prominently available in the *Bhagvati Sutra Nirjavalīya Sutra* and *Anasyaka Churni* while the Buddhist description is available in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* and its *Atthakatha*.

The Jain Version

After his father's death Kunika transferred his capital to Champanagarī and sent for all his ten brothers Kalikumara etc. He then divided the kingdom army wealth etc. into eleven parts and gave them their portion. Kunika had two real brothers (sons of Chellagī) named Halla and Vihalla.¹ King Śrenika during his life time gave them his two special things the Sechanaka elephant and a god given eighteen stringed necklace.²

1 The version however is discrepant in different books. The *Nirjavalīya* text narrates the whole episode in context of Vihalla only whereas the *Nirjavalīya Commentary*, the *Bhagvati Commentary* and the *Bhāratashvara Bahubali Commentary* mention both—Halla and Vihalla—in this context. The *Anuttaraśāstra* Text treats Vihalla and Vachasa as the sons of Queen Chellagī and Halla as the son of Queen Dhammī whereas the commentaries on the *Nirjavalīya* as well as *Bhagvati* mention Halla and Vihalla as the sons of Queen Chellagī. The whole topic is a subject of research.

2 It is said that the Sechanaka elephant and the god given necklace were equal in value to Shrenika's whole kingdom cf. *Anasyaka Churni* p. 167.

Riding on his elephant Sechanaka Vihalla Kumāra alongwith his harem party used to go every day to the banks of the Ganges for water sports. His enjoyments and lust gave rise to a talk in the town that Vihalla Kumāra and not Kūnika was really enjoying the grandeur of the kingdom. These talks reached Kūnika's queen Padmavati. She thought "What is this royal dignity to me if I do not have the Sechanaka elephant and the divine necklace? She expressed her feelings to Kūnika. With her repeated entreaties Kūnika was compelled to demand the elephant and the necklace from his brothers. He called Halla and Vihalla and said "Hand over the necklace and the elephant to me. They replied

"Our father has given these things exclusively to us. How can we give them up? Kūnika got enraged at his reply. Halla and Vihalla on getting an opportunity carried the necklace, elephant and the harem to their maternal grandfather Chetaka in Vanāli. Kūnika came to know about this. He sent his emissary to King Chetaka and asked him to return the necklace and the elephant alongwith Halla and Vihalla to Champanagar. Chetaka said "The necklace and the elephant belong to Halla and Vihalla. They have sought my asylum and I would not return them. If my grand son Kūnika the son of King Sreṇika and Chellana would give half of his kingdom to Halla and Vihalla I can manage to get him the necklace and the elephant. Kūnika again sent his ambassador and said "Halla and Vihalla have taken away the necklace and the elephant without my permission. Both these things belong to our State Magadha. Chetaka returned the ambassador with a negative reply.

ambassador reported all the details to Kūṇika who got enraged. Out of excitement his lips started quivering eyes reddened and forehead wrinkled. In anger he ordered the ambassador to go for the third time and said: I give you a written letter. In this is written: Return the elephant and the necklace or get ready to fight. Proceed to Cheṭaka's assembly and kick his throne. Deliver this letter into his hands with the edge of a spearhead. The emissary complied. Cheṭaka got angry with the contents of the letter and the etiquette of the emissary. In agony he said to the ambassador: I am prepared for war. Let Kuṇika come soon. I wait for him. Cheṭaka's aides caught hold of the ambassador by the neck and turn him out from the assembly. Kūṇika heard all this from the ambassador. He summoned his ten brothers: Kalikūmara etc. and said to them: Go to your states and come back here prepared with your armies. I shall fight with King Cheṭaka. All the princes went to their states and came back accompanied by their own three thousand of each elephants horses chariots and three crores of foot soldiers. Kuṇika too provided his elephants, horses chariots three thousand each and three crores of infantry men. Thus, Kūṇika with a great force of thirty three thousand each of elephants horses and chariots and thirty three crores of foot soldiers came to Vaiśālī.

King Cheṭaka too summoned his eighteen confederate Republican kings of Kāśī and Kosala nine being the Mallakās and nine the Lichchavis. Seeking their advice he said to them: Kuṇika, the son of Chellapā, the queen of King Śrenika, my grand son has come to fight for the necklace and the elephant.

Should we all fight with him or surrender to him?
All the kings said, Surrender not we shall fight

With this decision they all went to their respective kingdoms and each returned with his own three thousand elephants, three thousand horses three thousand chariots and three crores of foot soldiers. Cheṭaka himself got prepared with an equal number of his army. Cheṭaka marched into the battle-field with 57 000 each of elephants, horses, chariots and 57 crores of foot soldiers.

King Cheṭaka was a devotee of Mahāvira. He had taken the twelve vows of a Jain devotee. In addition he had his own special vow. I will not shoot more than one arrow a day. His arrow was an unfailing one, one which never missed the target. On the first day of the fight Kālikumvara came as the commander in chief from Ajātaśatru's side. He put his forces in an eagle order. King Cheṭaka organised his army in a cart-order. There was fierce fighting. King Cheṭaka using his unfailing arrow killed Kālikumara. Similarly every day each of the other nine brothers came forward as the chief commander and was killed by the unfailing arrow of King Cheṭaka.

At that time Mahāvira was present in Champa City. Kālī etc. the ten queens—mothers of the ten dead princes—asked Mahāvira questions pertaining to the battle. Mahāvira told them the details of the death of princes etc. The queens were so overwhelmed that they got initiated in his order.¹

Kupika fasted for three days continuously then worshipped the gods Śakrendra.

¹ *Niryuktiya Sutra* with commentary ■ 6a (Surat)

Chamarendra They appeared With their help the first day's Mahasalakantaka battle was planned Kūnika came to the battle field well protected with an impenetrable thunder bolt resistant armour made by Śakrendra so that Cheṭaka's unfailing arrow could not kill him

A fierce fight took place even a stone a straw or a feather hurled by Kūnika's army struck upon Cheṭaka's army as a heavy rock In a day's battle eighty four lac men were killed On the second day there was a battle of chariots The automatic chariot made by god Chamarendra wrought havoc with its hammer moving about in the midst of the army throughout the day striking In a day ninety six lac men were killed Cheṭaka with nine Mallakies and nine Licchhavis the eighteen republican kings of Kāśī and Kosala suffered defeat and King Kūnika was victorious¹

Destruction of the Rampart of Vaisali

After the defeat King Chetaka retreated into his city and shut the gate of the rampart Kūnika failed in breaking the rampart and laid a siege of the city One day there was an oracle When Śramaṇa Kūlavāḷaka² will be enamoured by the prostitute Māgadhika King Ashokachandra (Kūnika)

1 Bhagwati Sūtra Sataka 7 Uddeshaka 9 Sutra 301

2 Saint Kūlavāḷaka did his penance at the bank of the river Due to the influence of his penance the river changed its course to some extent hence he was called Kūlavāḷaka

(Litaradhigama Sutra Lakṣmī allabha's Vritti (Gujrati edition with translation) Ahmedabad 1935 part I p 8)

shall capture Vaiśālī city ¹ Kumka traced out Kulavalakī and also sent for Migadhikā. Migadhikā disguised herself as a lady devotee and enamoured Kūlavālaka with herself. Kūlavālaka in disguise of an astrologer reached Vaiśālī city with great difficulty. He came to know that the city was being protected under the influence of Munisuvrata Śvāmī tope. People asked him how the danger from the enemy could be averted. Then he replied: The enemy will not retreat from here unless this tope breaks. People began to dismantle the tope. The army of Kūnika retreated for a while because Kūnika was so instructed previously by the astrologer. When the people of Vaiśālī saw the army of Kumka retreating they were convinced of the astrologer's prediction and hence they destroyed the whole tope. As soon as the whole tope broke Kūnika abruptly attacked and destroyed the ramparts of Vaiśālī ².

Halla and Vibhalla ran away with the necklace and the elephant in order to escape from the enemy. There was a hidden fire in the ditch of the rampart. Sechanaka the elephant had known it with its clairvoyant knowledge. It refused to proceed on when forced to go ahead it took Halla and Vibhalla off and itself entered the fire. It died and for its good deeds was re-born in the first heaven. The god gifted necklace was picked up by the gods. Śāndevī (goddess of the Jain order) took Halla and Vibhalla to Lord

1 *Siman jaha kulavala magaham ganham ramissae*
Rajvaaso achanlae vesallim rajarim gahissae
 —Ibid p 10

2 *Ibid p 11*

Mahavira where they were initiated as monks in the Jain order¹

King Cetika took to a lonely place and fasted unto death attaining auspicious birth for his good thoughts²

The Buddhist Version

According to the Buddhist tradition there was a mine of jewels in a mountain near a city on the Ganges³. There was an agreement between Ajatasatru and Lichchhavis to share these jewels equally. Ajatasatru went on postponing his attendance for collection of his share. Lichchhavis alone used to take away all the jewels in Ajatasatru's absence. Ajatasatru was then deprived of his share. This happened so many times Ajatasatru was enraged and thought "A fight against the Lichchhavian Republic is difficult as their blows never fail"⁴. But come what may I will annihilate the great prosperity of the Vajjis. I will destroy them. He sent for his Prime Minister Brahmana Vassakāra and said "Go to Lord Buddha, convey to him my intention and seek his advice. Report back to me his reply"⁵. At that time Lord Buddha was staying on the Gṛdhakūṭa hillock. Vassakāra came there and enquired about his good health on behalf of Ajatasatru and conveyed to him Ajatasatru's message. Then Lord Buddha narrated seven unavoidable rules of the Vajjis —

1 *Bharatavarsa Bahubali* 1st ed pp 100-101

2 Acharya Bhikṣu *Bhikṣu Grantha Ratnakara* part II p 83

3 According to *Buddhacharya* a valuable perfumed goods were unloaded near the mountain (pag 484)

4 *Digha Nikaya Anthakatha (S mangalanizani)* part II p 326 B C Law *Buddhaghosa* p 111 *The Hindu Civilization* p 187

5 *Digha Nikaya Mahaparivara Sutta* 2/3/16

- (1) Plenary gathering—i.e. there is cent per cent attendance in their assembly meetings
- (2) Vajjis sit with complete unanimity in their council they rise unanimously and act unitedly On the sounding of the clarion bugle they attend the call even though they are engaged in taking meals or wearing the ornaments or dressing themselves
- (3) The Vajjis implement their decisions with complete unanimity They do not make unconstitutional things constitutional nor do they transgress the constitution
- (4) The Vajjis honour the old revere them respect and worship them
- (5) The Vajjis do not violate the chastity of the noble ladies nor do they compel noble girls to marry
- (6) The Vajjis have regards for places of worship outside or inside their town They do not disregard their decorum
- (7) The Vajjis give religious protection to Arhats so that Arhats may continue coming to their town in future and those already present with them may live there comfortably

So long as these seven unavoidable rules are observed they will prosper and suffer no loss.

Disension among the Vajjis

Vassakāra again came to Ajātasatru and reported. According to Buddha the Vajjis are unconquerable but they can be won over with bribery and disunion. The king asked the minister: How to sow disunion?

Vassakāra said: Tomorrow please mention about the Vajjis in the assembly. I shall speak in their favour and shall send a gift for the Vajjis. Punish me for this by expelling me out of your kingdom with a shaven head. I shall go saying: I have built your ramparts, defensive trenches. I know the weak points thereof. Call me not Vassakāra if I fail to set you right soon.

The next day all that happened. These talks reached the Vajjis also. Some people said: This is a fraud. Let Vassakāra not come across the Ganges. But many said: The event that has happened is very much in our favour. Ajātasatru used to take advice from Vassakāra. He is intelligent. Why should we not make use of him? He is now an enemy of our enemy and therefore an honoured friend of ours. With this basic idea they appointed Vassakāra as the Prime Minister in the Republic. In a few days he became influential there. He started to create differences amongst the Vajjis. Many Lichchhavis used to assemble and Vassakāra would take one of them aside and speak to him in confidence.

Do you till fields?

Yes I do.

By yoking a pair of bullocks?

Yes by yoking a pair of bullocks.

Another Lichchhavi would take the above mentioned Lichchhavi into seclusion and ask 'What did the Prime Minister say?' He would repeat the whole thing but the other Lichchhavi would not believe that the Prime Minister might have indulged in such an ordinary talk. He would sever his relations with him saying 'You do not trust me you are not telling the truth.' Sometime Vassakara would ask another Lichchhavi 'What vegetables were cooked in your house?' The same thing would again occur. He would say to some Lichchhavi in seclusion 'You are very poor.' To some Lichchhavi he would say 'You are very timid.' On being asked who told him so he would reply 'Such and such Lichchhavi has spoken so.'

Within a few days there developed so much of distrust and dissension among the Lichchhavis that when Vassakāra arranged to sound the clarion for the assembly not a single Lichchhavi turned up. Thus he became sure that it was very easy to conquer the Vajjis. He secretly invited Ajatasatru for an attack. Ajātasatru set out with his army. A bugle blew in Vaiśālī 'Come on let us go and prevent the enemy from crossing the Ganges.' None turned up. Another bugle was sounded.

'Come on let us not allow the enemy to enter the city and close the gates to check the enemy.' None came forward on hearing the bugle but ironically they would say 'We are poor we are coward how can we fight? Those who are rich and brave shall fight.' Ajātasatru entered the city through the open gates, ruined Vaiśālī and returned.¹

According to the Mahāparinirvāna Sutta,

Prime Ministers of Ajitāśatru—Sunidha and Vassakāra founded Patliputra City on the banks of the Ganges for protection from the Vajjis. When it was being built Buddha also came there by chance and dined there on the invitation of Sunidha and Vassakara. He praised Patliputra when there was a talk about it and gave three causes of its ruin—fire, water and mutual dissension. According to Buddha Sunidha and Vassakara founded the city in consultation with *Treyastrin* a gods.

Comments

Both the traditions in their own ways have given full details of the conquest and destruction of Vaisālī. The reasons and the pattern of war are completely different in both the traditions. The Jain tradition depicts Cheṭaka as the head of the Licchhavis. The Buddhist tradition puts only the Vajji Sangha (Licchhavi Republic) as the opponent. Certain references in the Jain tradition such as Kūṇika's and Cheṭaka's armies being thirty three crore and fifty seven crore in number respectively the help from Śakra and Asurendra gods one crore and eighty lac army casualties in only two days of war the oracle in regard to Kulavalkya the defeat of the Licchhavis by destruction of the tops etc appear to be exaggeration. The description in the Buddhist tradition appears to be simpler yet more comprehensive. On the one hand there is a mention of the jewel mine as the cause of the battle while in the other the precious divine necklace is stated to be the reason for this war. There is thus a virtual similarity. The arrow of Cheṭaka has been described as an unfailing one in the Jain

tradition The narration about in the Buddhist tradition that none of their (Vajraganas) strokes failed is again indicative of a similarity

The Jain tradition attributes the defence of the city to the influence of the tope Buddha says So long as the Vajras respect the topes inside and outside the city they will prosper and suffer no harm

The Buddhist tradition does not give so systematic an account of the belligerents as the Jain tradition has provided The Buddhist tradition does not even casually refer to Chejaka nine Mallakas and nine Licchavis and the eighteen Republican Kings Both the traditions acknowledge the use of manoeuvring for the conquest of the Vaisali

According to the Jain tradition the battle is stated to have been fought in two parts —

- 1 An open battle for a fortnight
- 2 Destruction of the ramparts

The latter even seems to have taken considerable time According to Dr Radha Kumud Mukherji¹ this period can be taken as a minimum of 16 years According to the Buddhist tradition Vassakāra stayed in Vaisali for three years and sowed dissensions and disunity among the Licchavis All this shows that the Buddhist tradition gives merely the posterior description of the war

Kunika's Queens and Son

The names of the three queens of

given in the Jaina tradition as Padmavati¹ Dhārini² and Subhadrā³. According to the *Avasthala Churni* Kunika married eight princesses⁴ but no categorical mention is made therein about them. The name of Kunika's queen given in the Buddhist tradition is Vajira. She was the daughter of King Prasenajit of Kosala. The name of Kunika's son given in the Jain tradition is Udayi while in the Buddhist tradition it is stated to be Udayibhadra. The Jain tradition states Udayi to be born of Queen Padmavati while in Buddhist tradition he is said to be the son of Queen Vajira but there arises a contradiction about his being the son of Vajira for according to the Buddhist tradition Udayibhadra was born on the day King Śrenika died⁵ while the marriage of Vajira with Kunika took place after the death of King Bimbisara⁶.

Death of Kunika

Ajatasatru Kunika's death is narrated in a varying manner in both the traditions. The Jain tradition states Kunika asked Mahāvīra 'Where are the monarchs (Chakravartis) born after death?' The answer was 'The man dying as a Chakravarti is reborn in the seventh hell'.

1 *Tassa nam kantiassa ranno pav nana namam devi*
—*Nirjaval ja Sutra* (Ed. P. L. Vaidya) p. 4

2 *Tassa nam kantiassa ranno Dharini namam devi*
—*Uttari Sutra* with Commentary

3 *Ibid* sutra 33 ■ 144

4 *Avasthala Churni* vol. II ■ 167

5 Acharya Buddhaghosha *Sumangalav la* part I p. 157
Jataka Atthakatha part IV p. 343 *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* p. 317

Where shall I go after death ?

You will go to the sixth hell

Am I not a Chakravarti ?

No you are not

This made Kūpika ambitious of becoming a Chakravarti. He got fourteen artificial jewels constructed. He set out for a universal victory. A god stopped him in Timisara cave and said. Only a monarch (Chakravarti) can enter this cave and twelve monarchs (Chakravartis) have already done so. Kūpika said "I am the thirteenth Chakravarti". The god got angry on this impossibility and he burnt Kūpika to death then and there.¹ The Buddhist tradition states that Kūpika was killed by his son Uḍḍiybbhadra out of ambition for the throne.²

Both the traditions are unanimous about Kūpika going to hell³ after death. The name of the hell mentioned in the Jain tradition is *Tamaḥ Prabha* whereas in the Buddhist tradition it is called *Loha Kumbhija*⁴ hell. Jainism holds that there are seven hells⁵ in all while Buddhism numbers them to be

1 *Thanāṅga Sūtra* 17th *Avasthaka Churni* (vol II) pp 176-177

2 *Mahāvastu* 4-1

3 *Dīgha Nikāya Atthakathā* part I pp 37-38

4 *Ratnaprabha tamahprabha valuprabha pankaprabha thumaprabha tamahprabha mahatamahprabha (tamahmahprabha)*

— *Bhāgavati Sūtra* śhataka I uddeśhaka 5

5 *Sanleśa kalasūtra saṅghata Jalasaurava dhāpāna paṭapāna*

Uttarakatha part V pp 266-271

eight According to the Buddhist tradition Ajatasatru after passing several transmigrations will attain salvation in the life of Vajstavi Buddha¹ Narrations about Kunika's previous births are available in both the traditions and their details differ but on basic considerations these have interesting similarities Both represent the nuclear theme that Śrenika had killed Kūnika in one of his previous births

In the Di yavadana (67) in place of *Jalaraurava* we find *raurava* and in place of *ajunaraurava* we find *maharaurava*

In *Samvutta Nikaya Anguttara Nikaya* and *Sutta Nipata* the names of the ten hells are given as *Avuda Nirarvuda Avana Atata Alaha Kumuda Sagandhika Uppala Junda ika Paduma*

(—*Samvutta Nikaya* 6/1/10 *Anguttara Nikaya* (P T S) part V p 173 *Sutta Nipata Mahavagga Lokajya Sutta* 3/56) According to the commentator they are not the names of the hells, but are the eases of the periods of living in the hells In the *Jaina Aśamas* also such time scales have been given For example see *Bhagvat* III tra sataka 6 vddesaka 7 In the Buddhist literature another list of five hells is given (*Majjhima Nikaya Devadatta S tra*)

In *Jatakas* some other names are given—*Lohakumbhi Nirama* is also mentioned therein (*Jataka Atthakatha* part III p 2 part V p 769 *Sutta Nipata Atthakatha* part I p 59)

1 *Dictiona y of Pali Proper Names* vol I p 35

For Jain description see *Niryaval ya Sutra* with Ghatalaj Maharaja's *Sanderbodhini Tika* pp 1-9 133 and for Buddhist description see *Jataka Atthakatha Sankalpeha Jataka* no 530

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INDEX

- Abhayakumāra 18 19 25 36 37 40
 Abhidhānachūṭamam 33a.
 Āgamas 14 ff 39 74n
 Ajataśatru (Kunika) 34 36 38ff
 Ajataśatru Buddhist Account of 31 49
 Ajataśatru Jain Account of 39 ff
 Ajataśatru s queen 43 72 ff
 Ajataśatru s faith 44 ff
 Ajataśatru s birth 50
 Ajataśatru s sons 72 ff
 Ajataśatru s death 72
 Ambapālī 36
 Amitayurdhyana Sūtra 11, 35 36
 Aparīra 8
 Ānanda 13
 Anguttara Nikāya 48a, 74
 Antagadadansāga 18a, 35
 Anuttaravimāna 19
 Anuttaravavāḍasa 17 ff 60n
 Anuvrata 43
 Aprāgaṇḍha 35
 Apte 59n
 Arhat 9 67
 Aśvaghoṣa 1 2n
 Aṣṭhakathās 54 57
 Aśokachandra 59
 Aśurendra 64 70
 Avadanaśataka 48 49
 Āvaśyaka Chūṛṇī 58 59 60n 65a
 34

- Bhagvati Sūtra 60 60n 64n 73n 74n
 Bhagvati Sutra Commentary 60n
 Bhambhasāra 14 16
 Bharateswar Bahubali Vṛtti 60n 66n
 Bhasa 56
 Bhattiya 34
 Bhikṣu Ācharya 66n
 Bimbisāra 1 ff 52 57
 Bimbisāra s date 1 25
 Bimbisāra s queens 18 34 ff 37 46 52, 60n 63
 Bimbisāra s death 53 72
 Brahmanas 9 10 23 39 45
 Brhatkathakosa 34
 Buddha 1 2 7 9 10 11 12 13 14, 24 25 38 49
 45 46 47 49 60 66 68 70
 Buddha s date 25
 Buddha Charita in
 Buddhaghosa 34 59 66n 72n
 Buddhist 1 7 8 9 10 14 35 36 38 45 49 50 51
 54 55 58 66 ff 70 71, 72 74
 Buddhist Council the First 49
 Buddhist India 50
 Buddhist literature 1 7 9
 Chaitya Purana Bhadra 40 41 42 43
 Chakravarti 72 73
 Chamarendra see asurendra
 Champa (Nagari) 39 40 41 ff 53 60 61
 Chattopadhyaya Vasant Kumar 56
 Chaupannamahāpurusaśāryam 22
 Chelana 15 16 23 35 37 50 51, 52 57 58 60
 60n 61
 Cheṭaka 56 57 60 61 ff 66 70 71
 Chūṭi 34
 Daśaśrutaskandha 14 21

- David: Rhys 23 45n, 49, 49n 57
 Devadatta 46 52
 Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā 12 12n 47
 Dhammapala 34
 Dhanya 17
 Dhāriṇī 35 36 60n 72
 Dharmarakṣita Bhikṣu 54
 Digambara Jains 23 34
 Dighanikaya 7n 10 10n 13 38 38n 46 60 66
 Dīgha Nīkāya Aṭṭhakathā 50 59n 60 66n 69n
 72n 73n
 Divyavadana 74n.
 Ekasūṭika Uttarāsanga 40
 Fausbail 55
 Gang 3 60n 66 109
 Gotama 24
 Gṛdhrakuta Mountain 11 66
 Guṇasīla gardens 15 16
 Halla 60 ff 65
 Harṣeṇa 34
 Hell 73 74 74n
 Hemachandra Acharya 59
 Indrabhūti 17
 Jacobi 3n
 Jain 1 3 7 24 33 34 35 36 37 38 44 45 47 50
 51 55 57 70 71 72 58 59 60 ff
 Jain Dr Kamta Prasad 34n
 Jain literature 7 20
 Jambudīvapapaṇṇatī 33 33n
 Janavasabha 13
 Janavasabha Sutta 13
 Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā 33n 47n, 55 55n, 72n, 73n 74n
 Jātilas 9 9n
 Jina 6

- Jivaka Kaumara Bhṛtya 11 35 39
 Johnson Helen M 22n
 Kalakumara 37 60 62 63
 Kālasaurika 18 19
 Kalpa Sūtra 56
 Karṣāpaṇa 5 35
 Karu 33
 Kaśi 62 64
 Kausambi 4 8
 Khemā 14 35 57
 Kosala 58 64
 Kosaladevi 35 50 52 55 57 58
 Kṣatriya 38 49
 Kusinara 38
 Kuṭadanta 10 23
 Kuṭadanta Sutta 10 23
 Lalitavistara 12
 Laṭṭhivana 9
 Law II C 66n
 Licchhavi 1* 64 66 68 69 70 71 (Also see Vajji)
 Life of Buddha 24 24n
 Loha Kumbhiya 73
 Madra 35 57
 Magadha 1 3 6 9 14 16 23 24 46 53 60 61
 Majjhima Nikāya 74n
 Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakatha 36n
 Mahakosala 55
 Mahali 12
 Mahaparinirvāṇa Sutta 60 66n 69
 Mahā sīla kaṇṭaka war 23 37 59ff
 Mahavamsa 73
 Mahāvastu 33
 śhāvira 1 7 8 9 14ff 25 35 39 40ff 45 56 58
 63, 66

- Mahavira-charnyam 18n
 Majumdar R C 53
 Malla 38 64 71
 Malavania Dolsukha 54
 Mandikukṣi (Maddakuchchhi) 3, 7
 Māra 24
 Mathurā 18
 Matsya Purāna 58n
 Maudglayajana 11 47
 Meghakumara 17 37
 Mukherjee Dr Rādhā Kumud 8 45 57 71
 Munisuvrat Swami Tope 65
 Namothugam 41 44
 Nanda 37
 Nandisena 18 37
 Nāru 33
 Nayadhammakahāo 17 17n 35 37n
 Nirgrantha (Nigantṭha) 1 3 4 5 6, 14 16 17 25,
 26 44 45 47
 Nirvāṇa 48
 Niryavahā 37 50 54 60 60n, 72n, 74n
 Niryavahā Commentary 60n 63n
 Nisītha Chūṇi 35
 Padmanābha 19
 Padmavati 35 36 61 72
 Pālī 1
 Parīkṣita Parva 45
 Parivrajaka 5
 Pāriva 7 9
 Pāṭliputra 70
 Petasvatthu Aṭṭhakathā 11
 Polanapora 20
 Prasannachandra 208

- Prasajit 34 35 46 55 56n 57 72
 Pukkhussati 12
 Purana 34 58 58n
 Rajagṛha 1 2 3 8 9, 12 13 14 15 21 23 24
 25 49 53
 Rathmusala War 23
 Raychaudhuri H C 43n
 Republic 56 60 62 66ff 68 70 71
 Rockhill 56
 Śakrendra 63 64 70
 Samaññaphala Sutta 39 40 44 46 46n
 Samavasāraṇa 18 21
 Samyaktva 25
 Samyutta Nikāya 55n 56n 74n
 Samyutta Nikāya Atthakathā 56
 Sankṛtyayana Pt Rahual 38n
 Śāsanadevi 65
 Sattapappi caye 50
 Sechanaka elephant 60ff
 Silavā brother of Ajatasatru 36 49
 Śiśunūga Dynasty 1
 Smith V A 45 45n
 Soaadaṇḍa 10
 Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta 10
 Śramaṇa 3 5 10 44 45
 Sreṇi 34
 Stupa 49
 Subhadra 72
 Sudharma Swāmī 45
 Sumaṅgalavilāsinī See Dīgha Nikāya Atthakathā
 Sunidha 70
 Sutta Nipāṭa 2n 74n
 Sutta Nipata Atthakathā 74n

Swapna Vāsavadattā 56

Swetāmber 34

Tamaḥ Prabha 73, 73n

Thiṇṇaṅga Sūtra 19n

Thiṇṇaṅga Commentary 45n 73n

Theragāthā, 36n

Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakāthā 49n

Therīgāthā 1 14 35 36n

Therīgāthā Aṭṭhakāthā 35 36n

Thorpe, Edward J 24

Tibetan tradition 56

Timiṣṭa cave 73

Tīrthankara 15 18 19 19n

Tripiṭakas 9ff., 25, 39 40

Trayastrimsa- gods 70

Triṣaṣṭisalakṣoparaśācharitraṃ 18n 20n, 22n, 34n 37n

Ugala 35

Udaybhadda (Udayi) 45 72 73

Udayana 57

Upaniṣada 58

Upātenika 34

Upasatha 10 11

Urureśa Kashyap 9

Uttarādhyayana Sūtra 3n, 4 6n, 7n

Uttarādhyayana Sūtra Vṛtti 64n

Uttarapurāṇa 34

Uvālagadatta 44n

Uvāla Sūtra 39 41n 42n 43n 44, 44n, 46n, 47n

Vaidēhī 11

Vaidēhī 1. 72n

Vaidēhī 56 60 61 64ff 69 71

Vajri 46 47 67 68ff 70 71

Vardhamāna 58

Vāsvi 35 57

Vastakara 47 66 68 69, 70 71

Vasud+va 42n

Vayu I urana 51n

Vedehi 35 56 57 58

Vehalla (Vihalla) 36 60ff, 65

Vehāyasa 36

Vijitavi Buddha 74

Vinay Piṭaka 9 9n 10 11n 46n

Vipulāchala 23

Yakṣa 13

